



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### About Google Book Search

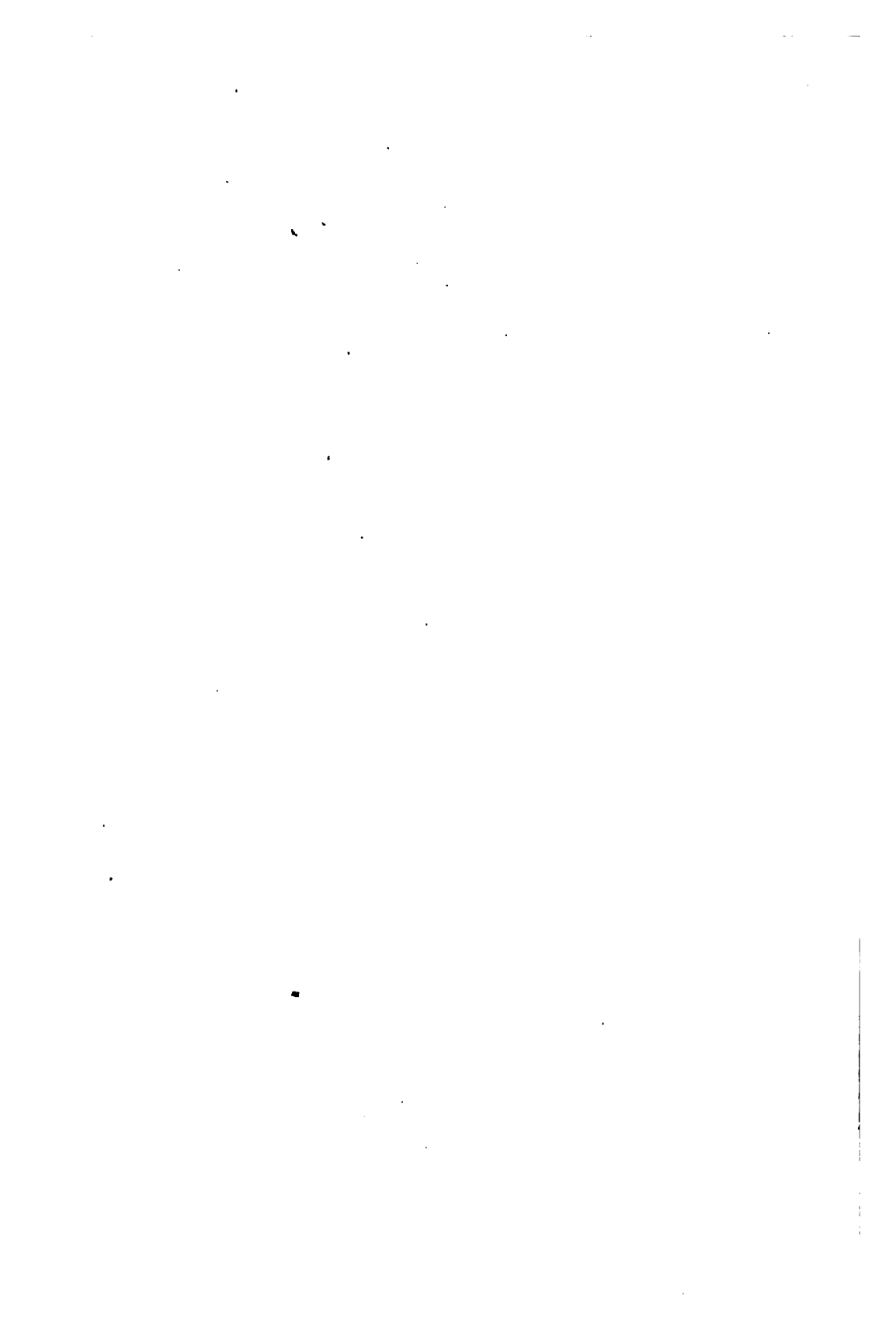
Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

22422.51 (2)  
A



HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY  
IN MEMORY OF  
HENRY WESTON FARNSWORTH  
CLASS OF 1912  
A SOLDIER OF THE FOREIGN LEGION IN FRANCE  
1915

TRANSFERRED  
TO  
HARVARD COLLEGE  
LIBRARY

















\_\_\_\_\_

*Édition de Luxe*

---

# THE CAXTONS

## *A FAMILY PICTURE*

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II.

ZICCI: A TALE

THE HAUNTED AND THE HAUNTERS  
OR, THE HOUSE AND THE BRAIN

BY

EDWARD BULWER LYTTON

*(LORD LYTTON)*



WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

<sup>City</sup>BOSTON

ESTES AND LAURIAT

1891

~~KF 10076~~

~~111 812.19~~

22432.51(2)

A



Gift of  
William Brewster

*ÉDITION DE LUXE.*

*Limited to One Thousand Copies.*

No. 22

*TYPOGRAPHY, ELECTROTYPING, AND  
PRINTING BY JOHN WILSON AND SON,  
UNIVERSITY PRESS, CAMBRIDGE, U.S.A.*



# THE CAXTONS



## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

### VOL. II.

---

	PAGE
✓CAXTON AND THE CAPTAIN TO THE RESCUE OF FANNY . . . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>
✓VIVIAN AND HIS FATHER . . . . .	127
✓BLANCHE AWAITING THE RETURN OF CAXTON . . . . .	168

---

### ZICCI.

✓"GLYNDON FELL SENSELESS ON THE EARTH" . . . . .	242
--	-----



# THE CAXTONS.

---

## PART XIII.

---

### CHAPTER I.

SAINT CHRYSOSTOM, in his work on "The Priesthood," defends deceit, if for a good purpose, by many Scriptural examples; ends his first book by asserting that it is often necessary, and that much benefit may arise from it; and begins his second book by saying that it ought not to be called "deceit," but "good management."<sup>1</sup>

"Good management," then, let me call the innocent arts by which I now sought to insinuate my project into favor and assent with my unsuspecting family. At first I began with Roland. I easily induced him to read some of the books, full of the charm of Australian life, which Trevanion had sent me; and so happily did those descriptions suit his own erratic tastes, and the free, half-savage man that lay rough and large within that soldierly nature, that he himself, as it were, seemed to suggest my own ardent desire, sighed, as the careworn Trevanion had done, that "he was not my age," and blew the flame that consumed me, with his own willing breath. So that when at last — wandering one day over the wild moors — I said, knowing his hatred of law and lawyers: "Alas, uncle, that nothing should be left for me but the Bar!" Captain Boland struck his cane into the peat and exclaimed, "Zounds,

<sup>1</sup> Hohler's translation.

sir! the Bar and lying, with truth and a world fresh from God before you!"

"Your hand, uncle, — we understand each other. Now help me with those two quiet hearts at home!"

"Plague on my tongue! what have I done?" said the Captain, looking aghast. Then, after musing a little time, he turned his dark eye on me and growled out, "I suspect, young sir, you have been laying a trap for me; and I have fallen into it, like an old fool as I am."

"Oh, sir, if you prefer the Bar! —"

"Rogue!"

"Or, indeed, I might perhaps get a clerkship in a merchant's office?"

"If you do, I will scratch you out of the pedigree!"

"Huzza, then, for Australasia!"

"Well, well, well!" said my uncle, —

"With a smile on his lip, and a tear in his eye," —

"the old sea-king's blood will force its way, — a soldier or a rover, there is no other choice for you. We shall mourn and miss you; but who can chain the young eagles to the eyrie?"

I had a harder task with my father, who at first seemed to listen to me as if I had been talking of an excursion to the moon. But I threw in a dexterous dose of the old Greek *Cleruchias* cited by Trevanion, which set him off full trot on his hobby, till after a short excursion to Euboea and the Chersonese, he was fairly lost amidst the Ionian colonies of Asia Minor. I then gradually and artfully decoyed him into his favorite science of Ethnology; and while he was speculating on the origin of the American savages, and considering the rival claims of Cimmericians, Israelites, and Scandinavians, I said quietly: "And you, sir, who think that all human improvement depends on the mixture of races; you, whose whole theory is an absolute sermon upon emigration, and the transplanting and interpolity of our species, — you, sir, should be the last man to chain your son, your elder son, to the soil, while your younger is the very missionary of rovers."

"Pisistratus," said my father, "you reason by *synecdoche*,—ornamental, but illogical;" and therewith, resolved to hear no more, my father rose and retreated into his study.

But his observation, now quickened, began from that day to follow my moods and humors; then he himself grew silent and thoughtful, and finally he took to long conferences with Roland. The result was that one evening in spring, as I lay listless amidst the weeds and fern that sprang up through the melancholy ruins, I felt a hand on my shoulder; and my father, seating himself beside me on a fragment of stone, said earnestly: "Pisistratus, let us talk. I had hoped better things from your study of Robert Hall."

"Nay, dear father, the medicine did me great good: I have not repined since, and I look steadfastly and cheerfully on life. But Robert Hall fulfilled his mission, and I would fulfil mine."

"Is there no mission in thy native land, O planeticose and exallotriote spirit?"<sup>1</sup> asked my father, with compassionate rebuke.

"Alas, yes! But what the impulse of genius is to the great, the instinct of vocation is to the mediocre. In every man there is a magnet; in that thing which the man can do best there is a loadstone."

"*Papæ!*" said my father, opening his eyes; "and are no loadstones to be found for you nearer than the Great Australasian Bight?"

"Ah, sir, if you resort to irony I can say no more!" My father looked down on me tenderly as I hung my head, moody and abashed.

"Son," said he, "do you think that there is any real jest at my heart when the matter discussed is whether you are to put wide seas and long years between us?" I pressed nearer to his side, and made no answer.

"But I have noted you of late," continued my father, "and I have observed that your old studies are grown distasteful to you; and I have talked with Roland, and I see that your desire

<sup>1</sup> Words coined by Mr. Caxton from *πλανητικός*, "disposed to roaming," and *ἐξαλλοτριόω*, "to export, to alienate."

is deeper than a boy's mere whim. And then I have asked myself what prospect I can hold out at home to induce you to be contented here, and I see none; and therefore I should say to you, 'Go thy ways, and God shield thee,' — but, Pisistratus, *your mother!* "

"Ah, sir, that is indeed the question; and there indeed I shrink! But, after all, whatever I were, — whether toiling at the Bar or in some public office, — I should be still so much from home and her. And then you, sir, she loves *you* so entirely that —"

"No," interrupted my father; "you can advance no arguments like these to touch a mother's heart. There is but one argument that comes home there: is it for your good to leave her? If so, there will be no need of further words. But let us not decide that question hastily; let you and I be together the next two months. Bring your books and sit with me; when you want to go out, tap me on the shoulder, and say 'Come.' At the end of those two months I will say to you 'Go,' or 'Stay.' And you will trust me; and if I say the last, you will submit?"

"Oh yes, sir, yes!"



## CHAPTER II.

THIS compact made, my father roused himself from all his studies, devoted his whole thoughts to me, sought with all his gentle wisdom to wean me imperceptibly from my one fixed, tyrannical idea, ranged through his wide pharmacy of books for such medicaments as might alter the system of my thoughts. And little thought he that his very tenderness and wisdom worked against him, for at each new instance of either my heart called aloud, "Is it not that thy tenderness may be



repaid, and thy wisdom be known abroad, that I go from thee into the strange land, O my father ? ”

And the two months expired, and my father saw that the magnet had turned unalterably to the loadstone in the Great Australasian Bight ; and he said to me, “ Go, and comfort your mother. I have told her your wish, and authorized it by my consent, for I believe now that it *is* for your good.”

I found my mother in the little room she had appropriated to herself next my father’s study. And in that room there was a pathos which I have no words to express ; for my mother’s meek, gentle, womanly soul spoke there, so that it was the Home of Home. The care with which she had transplanted from the brick house, and lovingly arranged, all the humble memorials of old times dear to her affections, — the black silhouette of my father’s profile cut in paper, in the full pomp of academics, cap and gown (how had he ever consented to sit for it ?), framed and glazed in the place of honor over the little hearth ; and boyish sketches of mine at the Hellenic Institute, first essays in sepia and Indian ink, to animate the walls, and bring her back, when she sat there in the twilight, musing alone, to sunny hours, when Sisty and the young mother threw daisies at each other ; and covered with a great glass shade, and dusted each day with her own hand, the flower-pot Sisty had bought with the proceeds of the domino-box on that memorable occasion on which he had learned “ how bad deeds are repaired with good.” There, in one corner, stood the little cottage piano which I remembered all my life, — old-fashioned, and with the jingling voice of approaching decrepitude, but still associated with such melodies as, after childhood, we hear never more ! And in the modest hanging shelves, which looked so gay with ribbons and tassels and silken cords, my mother’s own library, saying more to the heart than all the cold wise poets whose souls my father invoked in his grand Heraclea. The Bible over which, with eyes yet untaught to read, I had hung in vague awe and love as it lay open on my mother’s lap, while her sweet voice, then only serious, was made the oracle of its truths. And my first lesson-books were there, all hoarded. And bound in blue and gold, but elabo-

rately papered up, Cowper's Poems, — a gift from my father in the days of courtship: sacred treasure, which not even I had the privilege to touch, and which my mother took out only in the great crosses and trials of conjugal life, whenever some words less kind than usual had dropped unawares from her scholar's absent lips. Ah! all these poor household gods, all seemed to look on me with mild anger; and from all came a voice to my soul, "Cruel, dost thou forsake us?" And amongst them sat my mother, desolate as Rachel, and weeping silently.

"Mother! mother!" I cried, falling on her neck, "forgive me, — it is past; I cannot leave you!"



### CHAPTER III.

"No, no! it is for your good, — Austin says so. Go, — it is but the first shock."

Then to my mother I opened the sluices of that deep I had concealed from scholar and soldier. To her I poured all the wild, restless thoughts which wandered through the ruins of love destroyed; to her I confessed what to myself I had scarcely before avowed. And when the picture of that, the darker, side of my mind was shown, it was with a prouder face and less broken voice that I spoke of the manlier hopes and nobler aims that gleamed across the wrecks and the desert and showed me my escape.

"Did you not once say, mother, that you had felt it like a remorse that my father's genius passed so noiselessly away, — half accusing the happiness you gave him for the death of his ambition in the content of his mind? Did you not feel a new object in life when the ambition revived at last, and you thought you heard the applause of the world murmuring round your scholar's cell? Did you not share in the day-

dreams your brother conjured up, and exclaim, 'If *my* brother could be the means of raising *him* in the world!' And when you thought we had found the way to fame and fortune, did you not sob out from your full heart, 'And it is *my* brother who will pay back to *his* son all — all he gave up for me'?"

"I cannot bear this, Sisty! Cease, cease!"

"No; for do you not yet understand me? Will it not be better still if *your son* — yours — restore to your Austin all that he lost, no matter how? If through your son, mother, you do indeed make the world hear of your husband's genius, restore the spring to his mind, the glory to his pursuits; if you rebuild even that vaunted ancestral name which is glory to our poor sonless Roland; if your son can restore the decay of generations, and reconstruct from the dust the whole house into which you have entered, its meek, presiding angel, — ah, mother! if this can be done, it will be your work; for unless you can share my ambition, unless you can dry those eyes, and smile in my face, and bid me go, with a cheerful voice, all my courage melts from my heart, and again I say, I cannot leave you!"

Then my mother folded her arms round me, and we both wept, and could not speak; but we were both happy.

---

#### CHAPTER IV.

Now the worst was over, and my mother was the most heroic of us all. So I began to prepare myself in good earnest, and I followed Trevanion's instructions with a perseverance which I could never, at that young day, have thrown into the dead life of books. I was in a good school, amongst our Cumberland sheep-walks, to learn those simple elements of rural art which belong to the pastoral state. Mr. Sidney, in his admirable "Australian Hand-Book," recommends young gentlemen who think of becoming settlers in the Bush to bivouac

for three months on Salisbury Plain. That book was not then written, or I might have taken the advice; meanwhile I think, with due respect to such authority, that I went through a preparatory training quite as useful in seasoning the future emigrant. I associated readily with the kindly peasants and craftsmen, who became my teachers. With what pride I presented my father with a desk, and my mother with a work-box, fashioned by my own hands! I made Bolt a lock for his plate-chest, and (that last was *my* magnum opus, my great masterpiece) I repaired and absolutely set going an old turret-clock in the tower that had stood at 2 P. M. since the memory of man. I loved to think, each time the hour sounded, that those who heard its deep chime would remember me. But the flocks were my main care. The sheep that I tended and helped to shear, and the lamb that I hooked out of the great marsh, and the three venerable ewes that I nursed through a mysterious sort of murrain which puzzled all the neighborhood,—are they not written in thy loving chronicles, O House of Caxton?

And now, since much of the success of my experiment must depend on the friendly terms I could establish with my intended partner, I wrote to Trevanion, begging him to get the young gentleman who was to join me, and whose capital I was to administer, to come and visit us. Trevanion complied; and there arrived a tall fellow, somewhat more than six feet high, answering to the name of Guy Bolding, in a cut-away sporting-coat, with a dog whistle tied to the button-hole, drab shorts and gaiters, and a waistcoat with all manner of strange furtive pockets. Guy Bolding had lived a year and a half at Oxford as a "fast man,"—so "fast" had he lived that there was scarcely a tradesman at Oxford into whose books he had not contrived to run.

His father was compelled to withdraw him from the University, at which he had already had the honor of being plucked for "the little-go;" and the young gentleman, on being asked for what profession he was fit, had replied, with conscious pride, that he could "tool a coach!" In despair, the sire, who owed his living to Trevanion, had asked the states-

man's advice; and the advice had fixed me with a partner in expatriation.

My first feeling in greeting the "fast" man was certainly that of deep disappointment and strong repugnance. But I was determined not to be too fastidious; and, having a lucky knack of suiting myself pretty well to all tempers (without which a man had better not think of loadstones in the Great Australasian Bight), I contrived before the first week was out to establish so many points of connection between us that we became the best friends in the world. Indeed, it would have been my fault if we had not; for Guy Bolding, with all his faults, was one of those excellent creatures who are nobody's enemies but their own. His good-humor was inexhaustible. Not a hardship or privation came amiss to him. He had a phrase, "Such fun!" that always rushed laughingly to his lips when another man would have cursed and groaned. If we lost our way in the great trackless moors, missed our dinner, and were half-famished, Guy rubbed hands that would have felled an ox, and chuckled out, "Such fun!" If we stuck in a bog, if we were caught in a thunder-storm, if we were pitched head-over-heels by the wild colts we undertook to break in, Guy Bolding's sole elegy was "Such fun!" That grand shibboleth of philosophy only forsook him at the sight of an open book. I don't think that at that time he could have found "fun" even in Don Quixote. This hilarious temperament had no insensibility; a kinder heart never beat, — but, to be sure, it beat to a strange, restless, tarantula sort of measure, which kept it in a perpetual dance. It made him one of those officiously good fellows who are never quiet themselves, and never let any one else be quiet if they can help it. But Guy's great fault, in this prudent world, was his absolute incontinence of money. If you had turned a Euphrates of gold into his pockets at morning, it would have been as dry as the Great Sahara by twelve at noon. What he did with the money was a mystery as much to himself as to every one else. His father said, in a letter to me, that "he had seen him shying at sparrows with half-crowns!" That such a young man could come to no good in England, seemed perfectly clear.

Still, it is recorded of many great men, who did not end their days in a workhouse, that they were equally non-retentive of money. Schiller, when he had nothing else to give away, gave the clothes from his back, and Goldsmith the blankets from his bed. Tender hands found it necessary to pick Beethoven's pockets at home before he walked out. Great heroes, who have made no scruple of robbing the whole world, have been just as lavish as poor poets and musicians. Alexander, in parcelling out his spoils, left himself "hope"! And as for Julius Cæsar, he was two millions in debt when he shied his last half-crown at the sparrows in Gaul. Encouraged by these illustrious examples, I had hopes of Guy Bolding; and the more as he was so aware of his own infirmity that he was perfectly contented with the arrangement which made me treasurer of his capital, and even besought me, on no account, let him beg ever so hard, to permit his own money to come in his own way. In fact, I contrived to gain a great ascendancy over his simple, generous, thoughtless nature; and by artful appeals to his affections,—to all he owed to his father for many bootless sacrifices, and to the duty of providing a little dower for his infant sister, whose meditated portion had half gone to pay his college debts,—I at last succeeded in fixing into his mind an object to save for.

Three other companions did I select for our Cleruchia. The first was the son of our old shepherd, who had lately married, but was not yet encumbered with children,—a good shepherd, and an intelligent, steady fellow. The second was a very different character. He had been the dread of the whole squirearchy. A more bold and dexterous poacher did not exist. Now my acquaintance with this latter person, named Will Peterson, and more popularly "Will o' the Wisp," had commenced thus: Bolt had managed to rear, in a small copse about a mile from the house,—and which was the only bit of ground in my uncle's domains that might by courtesy be called "a wood,"—a young colony of pheasants, that he dignified by the title of a "preserve." This colony was audaciously despoiled and grievously depopulated, in spite of two watchers, who, with Bolt, guarded for seven nights succes-

sively the slumbers of the infant settlement. So insolent was the assault that bang, bang! went the felonious gun, — behind, before, within but a few yards of the sentinels, — and the gunner was off and the prey seized, before they could rush to the spot. The boldness and skill of the enemy soon proclaimed him, to the experienced watchers, to be Will o' the Wisp; and so great was their dread of this fellow's strength and courage, and so complete their despair of being a match for his swiftness and cunning, that after the seventh night the watchers refused to go out any longer; and poor Bolt himself was confined to his bed by an attack of what a doctor would have called rheumatism, and a moralist, rage. My indignation and sympathy were greatly excited by this mortifying failure, and my interest romantically aroused by the anecdotes I had heard of Will o' the Wisp; accordingly, armed with a thick bludgeon, I stole out at night, and took my way to the copse. The leaves were not off the trees, and how the poacher contrived to see his victims I know not; but five shots did he fire, and not in vain, without allowing me to catch a glimpse of him. I then retreated to the outskirts of the copse, and waited patiently by an angle which commanded two sides of the wood. Just as the dawn began to peep, I saw my man emerge within twenty yards of me. I held my breath, suffered him to get a few steps from the wood, crept on so as to intercept his retreat, and then pounce — such a bound! My hand was on his shoulder, — prr, prr; no eel was ever more lubricate. He slid from me like a thing immaterial, and was off over the moors with a swiftness which might well have baffled any clodhopper, — a race whose calves are generally absorbed in the soles of their hobnail shoes. But the Hellenic Institute, with its classical gymnasia, had trained its pupils in all bodily exercises; and though the Will o' the Wisp was swift for a clodhopper, he was no match at running for any youth who has spent his boyhood in the discipline of cricket, prisoner's bar, and hunt-the-hare. I reached him at length, and brought him to bay.

"Stand back!" said he, panting, and taking aim with his gun: "it is loaded."

"Yes," said I; "but though you're a brave poacher, you dare not fire at your fellow-man. Give up the gun this instant."

My address took him by surprise; he did not fire. I struck up the barrel, and closed on him. We grappled pretty tightly, and in the wrestle the gun went off. The man loosened his hold. "Lord ha' mercy! I have not hurt you?" he said falteringly.

"My good fellow, — no," said I; "and now let us throw aside gun and bludgeon, and fight it out like Englishmen, or else let us sit down and talk it over like friends."

The Will o' the Wisp scratched its head and laughed.

"Well, you're a queer one!" quoth it. And the poacher dropped the gun and sat down.

We did talk it over, and I obtained Peterson's promise to respect the preserve henceforth; and we thereon grew so cordial that he walked home with me, and even presented me, shyly and apologetically, with the five pheasants he had shot. From that time I sought him out. He was a young fellow not four and twenty, who had taken to poaching from the wild sport of the thing, and from some confused notions that he had a license from Nature to poach. I soon found out that he was meant for better things than to spend six months of the twelve in prison, and finish his life on the gallows after killing a gamekeeper. That seemed to me his most probable destiny in the Old World, so I talked him into a burning desire for the New one; and a most valuable aid in the Bush he proved too.

My third selection was in a personage who could bring little physical strength to help us, but who had more mind (though with a wrong twist in it) than both the others put together.

A worthy couple in the village had a son, who, being slight and puny, compared to the Cumberland breed, was shouldered out of the market of agricultural labor, and went off, yet a boy, to a manufacturing town. Now about the age of thirty, this mechanic, disabled for his work by a long illness, came home to recover; and in a short time we heard of nothing but the pestilential doctrines with which he was either shocking or infecting our primitive villagers. According to report, Corcyra



itself never engendered a democrat more awful. The poor man was really very ill, and his parents very poor; but his unfortunate doctrines dried up all the streams of charity that usually flowed through our kindly hamlet. The clergyman (an excellent man, but of the old school) walked by the house as if it were tabooed. The apothecary said, "Miles Square ought to have wine;" but he did not send him any. The farmers held his name in execration, for he had incited all their laborers to strike for another shilling a week. And but for the old Tower, Miles Square would soon have found his way to the only republic in which he could obtain that democratic fraternization for which he sighed; the grave being, I suspect, the sole commonwealth which attains that dead flat of social equality that life in its every principle so heartily abhors.

My uncle went to see Miles Square, and came back the color of purple. Miles Square had preached him a long sermon on the unholiness of war. "Even in defence of your king and country!" had roared the Captain; and Miles Square had replied with a remark upon kings in general that the Captain could not have repeated without expecting to see the old Tower fall about his ears, and with an observation about the country in particular, to the effect that "the country would be much better off if it *were* conquered!" On hearing the report of these loyal and patriotic replies, my father said "*Papæ!*" and roused out of his usual philosophical indifference, went himself to visit Miles Square. My father returned as pale as my uncle had been purple. "And to think," said he mournfully, "that in the town whence this man comes there are, he tells me, ten thousand other of God's creatures who speed the work of civilization while execrating its laws!"

But neither father nor uncle made any opposition when, with a basket laden with wine and arrowroot, and a neat little Bible bound in brown, my mother took her way to the excommunicated cottage. Her visit was as signal a failure as those that preceded it. Miles Square refused the basket, — "he was not going to accept alms and eat the bread of charity;" and on my mother meekly suggesting that "if Mr. Miles Square

would condescend to look into the Bible, he would see that even charity was no sin in giver or recipient," Mr. Miles Square had undertaken to prove "that, according to the Bible, he had as much a right to my mother's property as she had; that all things should be in common; and when all things were in common, what became of charity? No, he could not eat my uncle's arrowroot and drink his wine while my uncle was improperly withholding from him and his fellow-creatures so many unprofitable acres: the land belonged to the people." It was now the turn of Pisistratus to go. He went once, and he went often. Miles Square and Pisistratus wrangled and argued, argued and wrangled, and ended by taking a fancy to each other; for this poor Miles Square was not half so bad as his doctrines. His errors arose from intense sympathy with the sufferings he had witnessed amidst the misery which accompanies the reign of *millocratism*, and from the vague aspirations of a half-taught, impassioned, earnest nature. By degrees I persuaded him to drink the wine and eat the arrowroot *en attendant* that millennium which was to restore the land to the people. And then my mother came again and softened his heart, and for the first time in his life let into its cold crotchets the warm light of human gratitude. I lent him some books, amongst others a few volumes on Australia. A passage in one of the latter, in which it was said "that an intelligent mechanic usually made his way in the colony, even as a shepherd, better than a dull agricultural laborer," caught hold of his fancy and seduced his aspirations into a healthful direction. Finally, as he recovered, he entreated me to let him accompany me. And as I may not have to return to Miles Square, I think it right here to state that he did go with me to Australia, and did succeed, first as a shepherd, next as a superintendent, and finally, on saving money, as a landowner; and that in spite of his opinions of the unholiness of war, he was no sooner in possession of a comfortable log homestead than he defended it with uncommon gallantry against an attack of the aborigines, whose right to the soil was, to say the least of it, as good as his claim to my uncle's acres; that he commemorated his subsequent acquisition of a fresh allotment,

with the stock on it, by a little pamphlet, published at Sydney, on the "Sanctity of the Rights of Property;" and that when I left the colony, having been much pestered by two refractory "helps" that he had added to his establishment, he had just distinguished himself by a very anti-levelling lecture upon the duties of servants to their employers. What would the Old World have done for this man?

---

## CHAPTER V.

I HAD not been in haste to conclude my arrangements, for, independently of my wish to render myself acquainted with the small useful crafts that might be necessary to me in a life that makes the individual man a state in himself, I naturally desired to habituate my kindred to the idea of our separation, and to plan and provide for them all such substitutes or distractions, in compensation for my loss, as my fertile imagination could suggest. At first, for the sake of Blanche, Roland, and my mother, I talked the Captain into reluctant sanction of his sister-in-law's proposal to unite their incomes and share alike, without considering which party brought the larger proportion into the firm. I represented to him that unless he made that sacrifice of his pride, my mother would be wholly without those little notable uses and objects, those small household pleasures, so dear to woman; that all society in the neighborhood would be impossible, and that my mother's time would hang so heavily on her hands that her only resource would be to muse on the absent one and fret. Nay, if he persisted in so false a pride, I told him, fairly, that I should urge my father to leave the Tower. These representations succeeded; and hospitality had commenced in the old hall, and a knot of gossips had centred round my mother, groups of laughing children had relaxed the still brow of Blanche, and the Captain himself was a more cheerful and

social man. My next point was to engage my father in the completion of the Great Book. "Ah! sir," said I, "give me an inducement to toil, — a reward for my industry. Let me think, in each tempting pleasure, each costly vice, — No, no; I will save for the Great Book! And the memory of the father shall still keep the son from error. Ah, look you, sir! Mr. Trevanion offered me the loan of £1,500 necessary to commence with; but you generously and at once said: 'No; you must not begin life under the load of debt.' And I knew you were right and yielded, — yielded the more gratefully that I could not but forfeit something of the just pride of manhood in incurring such an obligation to the father of — Miss Trevanion. Therefore I have taken that sum from you, — a sum that would almost have sufficed to establish your younger and worthier child in the world forever. To that child let me repay it, otherwise I will not take it. Let me hold it as a trust for the Great Book; and promise me that the Great Book shall be ready when your wanderer returns and accounts for the missing talent."

And my father pished a little, and rubbed off the dew that had gathered on his spectacles. But I would not leave him in peace till he had given me his word that the Great Book should go on *à pas de géant*, — nay, till I had seen him sit down to it with good heart, and the wheel went round again in the quiet mechanism of that gentle life.

Finally, and as the culminating acme of my diplomacy, I effected the purchase of the neighboring apothecary's practice and good-will for Squills, upon terms which he willingly subscribed to; for the poor man had pined at the loss of his favorite patients, — though Heaven knows they did not add much to his income. And as for my father, there was no man who diverted him more than Squills, though he accused him of being a materialist, and set his whole spiritual pack of sages to worry and bark at him, from Plato and Zeno to Reid and Abraham Tucker.

Thus, although I have very loosely intimated the flight of time, more than a whole year elapsed from the date of our settlement at the Tower and that fixed for my departure.

In the mean while, despite the rarity amongst us of that phenomenon, a newspaper, we were not so utterly cut off from the sounds of the far-booming world beyond, but what the intelligence of a change in the Administration and the appointment of Mr. Trevanion to one of the great offices of state reached our ears. I had kept up no correspondence with Trevanion subsequent to the letter that occasioned Guy Bolding's visit; I wrote now to congratulate him: his reply was short and hurried.

An intelligence that startled me more, and more deeply moved my heart, was conveyed to me, some three months or so before my departure, by Trevanion's steward. The ill health of Lord Castleton had deferred his marriage, intended originally to be celebrated as soon as he arrived of age. He left the University with the honors of "a double-first class;" and his constitution appeared to rally from the effects of studies more severe to him than they might have been to a man of quicker and more brilliant capacities, when a feverish cold, caught at a county meeting in which his first public appearance was so creditable as fully to justify the warmest hopes of his party, produced inflammation of the lungs and ended fatally. The startling contrast forced on my mind, — here, sudden death and cold clay; there, youth in its first flower, princely rank, boundless wealth, the sanguine expectation of an illustrious career, and the prospect of that happiness which smiled from the eyes of Fanny, — that contrast impressed me with a strange awe: death seems so near to us when it strikes those whom life most flatters and caresses. Whence is that curious sympathy that we all have with the possessors of worldly greatness when the hour-glass is shaken and the scythe descends? If the famous meeting between Diogenes and Alexander had taken place, not before, but after the achievements which gave to Alexander the name of Great, the Cynic would not, perhaps, have envied the hero his pleasures nor his splendors, — neither the charms of Statira nor the tiara of the Mede; but if, the day after, a cry had gone forth, "Alexander the Great is dead!" verily I believe that Diogenes would have coiled himself up in his tub and felt

that with the shadow of the stately hero something of glory and of warmth had gone from that sun which it should darken never more. In the nature of man, the humblest or the hardest, there is a something that lives in all of the Beautiful or the Fortunate, which hope and desire have appropriated, even in the vanities of a childish dream.

---

## CHAPTER VI.

"WHY are you here all alone, cousin? How cold and still it is amongst the graves!"

"Sit down beside me, Blanche: it is not colder in the churchyard than on the village green."

And Blanche sat down beside me, nestled close to me, and leaned her head upon my shoulder. We were both long silent. It was an evening in the early spring, clear and serene; the roseate streaks were fading gradually from the dark gray of long, narrow, fantastic clouds. Tall, leafless poplars, that stood in orderly level line on the lowland between the churchyard and the hill, with its crown of ruins, left their sharp summits distinct against the sky. But the shadows coiled dull and heavy round the evergreens that skirted the churchyard, so that their outline was vague and confused; and there was a depth in that lonely stillness, broken only when the thrush flew out from the lower bushes, and the thick laurel-leaves stirred reluctantly, and again were rigid in repose. There is a certain melancholy in the evenings of early spring which is among those influences of Nature the most universally recognized, the most difficult to explain. The silent stir of reviving life, which does not yet betray signs in the bud and blossom, only in a softer clearness in the air, a more lingering pause in the slowly lengthening day; a more delicate freshness and balm in the twilight atmosphere; a more lively,

yet still unquiet, note from the birds, settling down into their coverts; the vague sense under all that hush, which still outwardly wears the bleak sterility of winter, of the busy change, hourly, momentarily, at work, renewing the youth of the world, re-clothing with vigorous bloom the skeletons of things,—all these messages from the heart of Nature to the heart of Man may well affect and move us. But why with melancholy? No thought on our part connects and construes the low, gentle voices. It is not *thought* that replies and reasons, it is *feeling* that hears and dreams. Examine not, O child of man!—examine not that mysterious melancholy with the hard eyes of thy reason; thou canst not impale it on the spikes of thy thorny logic, nor describe its enchanted circle by problems conned from thy schools. Borderer thyself of two worlds,—the Dead and the Living,—give thine ear to the tones, bow thy soul to the shadows, that steal, in the Season of Change, from the dim Border Land.

BLANCHE (in a whisper).—“What are you thinking of? Speak, pray!”

PISISTRATUS.—“I was not thinking, Blanche,—or, if I were, the thought is gone at the mere effort to seize or detain it.”

BLANCHE (after a pause).—“I know what you mean. It is the same with me often,—so often when I am sitting by myself, quite still. It is just like the story Primmins was telling us the other evening, ‘how there was a woman in her village who saw things and people in a piece of crystal not bigger than my hand;<sup>1</sup> they passed along as large as life, but they were only pictures in the crystal.’ Since I heard the story, when aunt asks me what I am thinking of, I long to say, ‘I’m not thinking, I’m seeing pictures in the crystal!’”

<sup>1</sup> In primitive villages in the West of England the belief that the absent may be seen in a piece of crystal is, or was not many years ago, by no means an uncommon superstition. I have seen more than one of these magic mirrors, which Spenser, by the way, has beautifully described. They are about the size and shape of a swan’s egg. It is not every one, however, who can be a crystal-seer; like second-sight, it is a special gift. N. B.—Since the above note (appended to the first edition of this work) was written, crystals and crystal-seers have become very familiar to those who interest themselves in speculations upon the disputed phenomena ascribed to Mesmerical *Clairvoyance*.

PISTRATUS. — "Tell my father *that*, — it will please him; there is more philosophy in it than you are aware of, Blanche. There are wise men who have thought the whole world, its 'pride, pomp, and circumstance,' only a phantom image, — a picture in the crystal."

BLANCHE. — "And I shall see you, — see us both, as we are sitting here; and that star which has just risen yonder, — see it all in my crystal, when you are gone! — gone, cousin!" (And Blanche's head drooped.)

There was something so quiet and deep in the tenderness of this poor motherless child that it did not affect one superficially, like a child's loud momentary affection, in which we know that the first toy will replace us. I kissed my little cousin's pale face and said, "And I too, Blanche, have my crystal; and when I consult it, I shall be very angry if I see you sad and fretting, or seated alone. For you must know, Blanche, that that is all selfishness. God made us, not to indulge only in crystal pictures, weave idle fancies, pine alone, and mourn over what we cannot help, but to be alert and active, — givers of happiness. Now, Blanche, see what a trust I am going to bequeath you. You are to supply my place to all whom I leave; you are to bring sunshine wherever you glide with that shy, soft step, — whether to your father when you see his brows knit and his arms crossed (that, indeed, you always do), or to mine when the volume drops from his hand, when he walks to and fro the room, restless, and murmuring to himself, then you are to steal up to him, put your hand in his, lead him back to his books, and whisper, 'What will Sisty say if his younger brother, the Great Book, is not grown up when he comes back?' And my poor mother, Blanche! Ah, how can I counsel you there, — how tell you where to find comfort for her? Only, Blanche, steal into her heart and be her daughter. And to fulfil this threefold trust, you must not content yourself with seeing pictures in the crystal, — do you understand me?"

"Oh, yes!" said Blanche, raising her eyes, while the tears rolled from them, and folding her arms resolutely on her breast.



"And so," said I, "as we two, sitting in this quiet burial-ground, take new heart for the duties and cares of life, so see, Blanche, how the stars come out, one by one, to smile upon us; for they, too, glorious orbs as they are, perform their appointed tasks. Things seem to approximate to God in proportion to their vitality and movement. Of all things, least inert and sullen should be the soul of man. How the grass grows up over the very graves,—quickly it grows and greenly; but neither so quick nor so green, my Blanche, as hope and comfort from human sorrows."

## PART XIV.

## CHAPTER I.

THERE is a beautiful and singular passage in Dante (which has not perhaps attracted the attention it deserves), wherein the stern Florentine defends Fortune from the popular accusations against her. According to him she is an angelic power appointed by the Supreme Being to direct and order the course of human splendors; she obeys the will of God; she is blessed; and hearing not those who blaspheme her, calm and aloft amongst the other angelic powers, revolves her spherul course and rejoices in her beatitude.<sup>1</sup>

This is a conception very different from the popular notion which Aristophanes, in his true instinct of things popular, expresses by the sullen lips of his Plutus. That deity accounts for his blindness by saying that "when a boy he had indiscreetly promised to visit only the good;" and Jupiter was so envious of the good that he blinded the poor money-god. Whereon Chremylus asks him whether, "if he recovered his sight, he would frequent the company of the good." "Certainly," quoth Plutus; "for I have not seen them ever so long." "Nor I either," rejoins Chremylus, pithily, "for all I can see out of both eyes."

But that misanthropical answer of Chremylus is neither here nor there, and only diverts us from the real question, and that

<sup>1</sup> Dante here evidently associates Fortune with the planetary influences of judicial astrology. It is doubtful whether Schiller ever read Dante; but in one of his most thoughtful poems he undertakes the same defence of Fortune, making the Fortunate a part of the Beautiful.

is, "Whether Fortune be a heavenly, Christian angel, or a blind, blundering, old heathen deity?" For my part, I hold with Dante; for which, if I were so pleased, or if at this period of my memoirs I had half a dozen pages to spare, I could give many good reasons. One thing, however, is quite clear, that whether Fortune be more like Plutus or an angel, it is no use abusing her, — one may as well throw stones at a star. And I think, if one looked narrowly at her operations, one might perceive that she gives every man a chance at least once in his life: if he take and make the best of it, she will renew her visits; if not, *itur ad astra*! And therewith I am reminded of an incident quaintly narrated by Mariana in his "History of Spain," how the army of the Spanish kings got out of a sad hobble among the mountains at the Pass of Losa by the help of a shepherd who showed them the way. "But," saith Mariana, parenthetically, "some do say the shepherd was an angel; for after he had shown the way, he was never seen more." That is, the angelic nature of the guide was proved by being only once seen, and after having got the army out of the hobble, leaving it to fight or run away, as it had most mind to. Now, I look upon that shepherd, or angel, as a very good type of my fortune at least. The apparition showed me my way in the rocks to the great "Battle of Life;" after that — hold fast and strike hard!

Behold me in London with Uncle Roland. My poor parents naturally wished to accompany me, and take the last glimpse of the adventurer on board ship; but I, knowing that the parting would seem less dreadful to them by the hearthstone, and while they could say, "He is with Roland; he is not yet gone from the land," insisted on their staying behind; and thus the farewell was spoken. But Roland, the old soldier, had so many practical instructions to give, could so help me in the choice of the outfit and the preparations for the voyage, that I could not refuse his companionship to the last. Guy Bolding, who had gone to take leave of his father, was to join me in town, as well as my humbler Cumberland colleagues.

As my uncle and I were both of one mind upon the question of economy, we took up our quarters at a lodging-house in the

City; and there it was that I first made acquaintance with a part of London of which few of my politer readers even pretend to be cognizant. I do not mean any sneer at the City itself, my dear alderman,—that jest is worn out. I am not alluding to streets, courts, and lanes; what I mean may be seen at the West-end—not so well as at the East, but still seen very fairly,—I mean **THE HOUSE-TOPS!**

---

## CHAPTER II.

### BEING A CHAPTER ON HOUSE-TOPS.

**THE HOUSE-TOPS!** What a soberizing effect that prospect produces on the mind. But a great many requisites go towards the selection of the right point of survey. It is not enough to secure a lodging in the attic; you must not be fobbed off with a front attic that faces the street. First, your attic must be unequivocally a back attic; secondly, the house in which it is located must be slightly elevated above its neighbors; thirdly, the window must not lie slant on the roof, as is common with attics,—in which case you can only catch a peep of that leaden canopy which infatuated Londoners call the sky,—but must be a window perpendicular, and not half blocked up by the parapets of that fosse called the gutter; and, lastly, the sight must be so humored that you cannot catch a glimpse of the pavements: if you once see the world beneath, the whole charm of that world above is destroyed. Taking it for granted that you have secured these requisites, open your window, lean your chin on both hands, the elbows propped commodiously on the sill, and contemplate the extraordinary scene which spreads before you. You find it difficult to believe life can be so tranquil on high, while it is so noisy and turbulent below. What astonishing stillness! Eliot Warburton (seductive enchanter!) recommends you to sail down the Nile if you want to lull the

vexed spirit. It is easier and cheaper to hire an attic in Holborn! You don't have the crocodiles, but you have animals no less hallowed in Egypt,—the cats! And how harmoniously the tranquil creatures blend with the prospect; how noiselessly they glide along at the distance, pause, peer about, and disappear! It is only from the attic that you can appreciate the picturesque which belongs to our domesticated tiger-kin! The goat should be seen on the Alps, and the cat on the house-top.

By degrees the curious eye takes the scenery in detail; and first, what fantastic variety in the heights and shapes of the chimney-pots! Some all level in a row, uniform and respectable, but quite uninteresting; others, again, rising out of all proportion, and imperatively tasking the reason to conjecture why they are so aspiring. Reason answers that it is but a homely expedient to give freer vent to the smoke; wherewith Imagination steps in, and represents to you all the fretting and fuming and worry and care which the owners of that chimney, now the tallest of all, endured before, by building it higher, they got rid of the vapors. You see the distress of the cook when the sooty invader rushed down, "like a wolf on the fold," full spring on the Sunday joint. You hear the exclamations of the mistress (perhaps a bride,—house newly furnished) when, with white apron and cap, she ventured into the drawing-room, and was straightway saluted by a joyous dance of those monads called vulgarly "smuts." You feel manly indignation at the brute of a bridegroom who rushes out from the door, with the smuts dancing after him, and swears, "Smoked out again! By the Arch-smoker himself, I'll go and dine at the club!" All this might well have been, till the chimney-pot was raised a few feet nearer heaven; and now perhaps that long-suffering family owns the happiest home in the Row. Such contrivances to get rid of the smoke! It is not every one who merely heightens his chimney; others clap on the hollow tormentor all sorts of odd head-gear and cowls. Here, patent contrivances act the purpose of weather-cocks, swaying to and fro with the wind; there, others stand as fixed as if, by a *sic jubeo*, they had settled the business.

But of all those houses that in the street one passes by, unsuspecting of what's the matter within, there is not one in a hundred but what there has been the devil to do to cure the chimneys of smoking! At that reflection Philosophy dismisses the subject, and decides that, whether one lives in a hut or a palace, the first thing to do is to look to the hearth — and get rid of the vapors.

New beauties demand us. What endless undulations in the various declivities and ascents, — here a slant, there a zigzag! With what majestic disdain yon roof rises up to the left! Doubtless a palace of Genii, or Gin (which last is the proper Arabic word for those builders of halls out of nothing, employed by Aladdin). Seeing only the roof of that palace boldly breaking the sky-line, how serene your contemplations! Perhaps a star twinkles over it, and you muse on soft eyes far away; while below at the threshold — No, phantoms! we see you not from our attic. Note, yonder, that precipitous fall, — how ragged and jagged the roof-scene descends in a gorge! He who would travel on foot through the pass of that defile, of which we see but the picturesque summits, stops his nose, averts his eyes, guards his pockets, and hurries along through the squalor of the grim London lazzaroni. But seen *above*, what a noble break in the sky-line! It would be sacrilege to exchange that fine gorge for a dead flat of dull rooftops. Look here, how delightful! that desolate house with no roof at all, — gutted and skinned by the last London fire! You can see the poor green-and-white paper still clinging to the walls, and the chasm that once was a cupboard, and the shadows gathering black on the aperture that once was a hearth! Seen below, how quickly you would cross over the way! That great crack forebodes an avalanche; you hold your breath, not to bring it down on your head. But seen *above*, what a compassionate, inquisitive charm in the skeleton ruin! How your fancy runs riot, — re-peopling the chambers, hearing the last cheerful good-night of that destined Pompeii, creeping on tiptoe with the mother when she gives her farewell look to the baby. Now all is midnight and silence; then the red, crawling serpent comes out. Lo! his breath; hark!

his hiss. Now, spire after spire he winds and he coils; now he soars up erect, — crest superb, and forked tongue, — the beautiful horror! Then the start from the sleep, and the doubtful awaking, and the run here and there, and the mother's rush to the cradle; the cry from the window, and the knock at the door, and the spring of those on high towards the stair that leads to safety below, and the smoke rushing up like the surge of a hell! And they run back stifled and blinded, and the floor heaves beneath them like a bark on the sea. Hark! the grating wheels thundering low; near and nearer comes the engine. Fix the ladders, — there! there! at the window, where the mother stands with the babe! Splash and hiss comes the water; pales, then flares out, the fire! Foe defies foe; element, element. How sublime is the war! But the ladder, the ladder, — there, at the window! All else are saved, — the clerk and his books; the lawyer with that tin box of title-deeds; the landlord, with his policy of insurance; the miser, with his bank-notes and gold: all are saved, — all but the babe and the mother. What a crowd in the streets; how the light crimsons over the gazers, hundreds on hundreds! All those faces seem as one face, with fear. Not a man mounts the ladder. Yes, there, — gallant fellow! God inspires, — God shall speed thee! How plainly I see him! his eyes are closed, his teeth set. The serpent leaps up, the forked tongue darts upon him, and the reek of the breath wraps him round. The crowd has ebbed back like a sea, and the smoke rushes over them all. Ha! what dim forms are those on the ladder? Near and nearer, — crash come the roof-tiles! Alas and alas! no! a cry of joy, — a "Thank Heaven!" and the women force their way through the men to come round the child and the mother. All is gone save that skeleton ruin. But the ruin is seen from *above*. O Art! study life from the roof-tops!

## CHAPTER III.

I WAS again foiled in seeing Trevanion. It was the Easter recess, and he was at the house of one of his brother ministers somewhere in the North of England. But Lady Ellinor was in London, and I was ushered into her presence. Nothing could be more cordial than her manner, though she was evidently much depressed in spirits, and looked wan and careworn.

After the kindest inquiries relative to my parents and the Captain, she entered with much sympathy into my schemes and plans, which she said Trevanion had confided to her. The sterling kindness that belonged to my old patron (despite his affected anger at my not accepting his proffered loan) had not only saved me and my fellow-adventurer all trouble as to allotment orders, but procured advice as to choice of site and soil, from the best practical experience, which we found afterwards exceedingly useful. And as Lady Ellinor gave me the little packet of papers, with Trevanion's shrewd notes on the margin, she said, with a half sigh, "Albert bids me say that he wishes he were as sanguine of his success in the Cabinet as of yours in the Bush." She then turned to her husband's rise and prospects, and her face began to change; her eyes sparkled, the color came to her cheeks. "But you are one of the few who know him," she said, interrupting herself suddenly; "you know how he sacrifices all things, — joy, leisure, health, — to his country. There is not one selfish thought in his nature. And yet such envy, — such obstacles still! And [her eyes dropped on her dress, and I perceived that she was in mourning, though the mourning was not deep], and," she added, "it has pleased Heaven to withdraw from his side one who would have been worthy his alliance."

I felt for the proud woman, though her emotion seemed



more that of pride than sorrow. And perhaps Lord Castleton's highest merit in her eyes had been that of ministering to her husband's power and her own ambition. I bowed my head in silence, and thought of Fanny. Did she, too, pine for the lost rank, or rather mourn the lost lover?

After a time I said, hesitatingly, "I scarcely presume to condole with you, Lady Ellinor, yet, believe me, few things ever shocked me like the death you allude to. I trust Miss Trevanion's health has not much suffered. Shall I not see her before I leave England?"

Lady Ellinor fixed her keen bright eyes searchingly on my countenance, and perhaps the gaze satisfied her; for she held out her hand to me with a frankness almost tender, and said: "Had I had a son, the dearest wish of my heart had been to see you wedded to my daughter."

I started up; the blood rushed to my cheeks, and then left me pale as death. I looked reproachfully at Lady Ellinor, and the word "cruel!" faltered on my lips.

"Yes," continued Lady Ellinor, mournfully, "that was my real thought, my impulse of regret, when I first saw you. But as it is, do not think me too hard and worldly if I quote the lofty old French proverb, *Noblesse oblige*. Listen to me, my young friend: we may never meet again, and I would not have your father's son think unkindly of me, with all my faults. From my first childhood I was ambitious,—not, as women usually are, of mere wealth and rank, but ambitious as noble men are, of power and fame. A woman can only indulge such ambition by investing it in another. It was not wealth, it was not rank, that attracted me to Albert Trevanion: it was the nature that dispenses with the wealth and commands the rank. Nay," continued Lady Ellinor, in a voice that slightly trembled, "I may have seen in my youth, before I knew Trevanion, one [she paused a moment, and went on hurriedly]—one who wanted but ambition to have realized my ideal. Perhaps even when I married—and it was said for love—I loved less with my whole heart than with my whole mind. I may say this now, for *now* every beat of this pulse is wholly and only true to him with whom I have schemed and toiled

and aspired ; with whom I have grown as one ; with whom I have shared the struggle, and now partake the triumph, realizing the visions of my youth."

Again the light broke from the dark eyes of this grand daughter of the world, who was so superb a type of that moral contradiction, — *an ambitious woman*.

"I cannot tell you," resumed Lady Ellinor, softening, "how pleased I was when you came to live with us. Your father has perhaps spoken to you of me and of our first acquaintance!"

Lady Ellinor paused abruptly, and surveyed me as she paused. I was silent.

"Perhaps, too, he has blamed me?" she resumed, with a heightened color.

"He never blamed you, Lady Ellinor!"

"He had a right to do so, — though I doubt if he would have blamed me on the true ground. Yet no; he never could have done me the wrong that your uncle did when, long years ago, Mr. de Caxton in a letter — the very bitterness of which disarmed all anger — accused me of having trifled with Austin, — nay, with himself! And *he*, at least, had *no* right to reproach me," continued Lady Ellinor warmly, and with a curve of her haughty lip; "for if I felt interest in his wild thirst for some romantic glory, it was but in the hope that what made the one brother so restless might at least wake the other to the ambition that would have become his intellect and aroused his energies. But these are old tales of follies and delusions now no more: only this will I say, that I have ever felt, in thinking of your father, and even of your sterner uncle, as if my conscience reminded me of a debt which I longed to discharge, — if not to them, to their children. So when we knew you, believe me that your interests, your career, instantly became to me an object. But mistaking you, when I saw your ardent industry bent on serious objects, and accompanied by a mind so fresh and buoyant, and absorbed as I was in schemes or projects far beyond a woman's ordinary province of hearth and home, I never dreamed, while you were our guest, — never dreamed of danger to you or Fanny. I wound you, — pardon me; but I must vindicate myself. I repeat that if we had a son

to inherit our name, to bear the burden which the world lays upon those who are born to influence the world's destinies, there is no one to whom Trevanion and myself would sooner have intrusted the happiness of a daughter. But my daughter is the sole representative of the mother's line, of the father's name: it is not her happiness alone that I have to consult, it is her duty, — duty to her birthright, to the career of the noblest of England's patriots; duty, I may say, without exaggeration, to the country for the sake of which that career is run!"

"Say no more, Lady Ellinor, say no more; I understand you. I have no hope, I never had hope — it was a madness — it is over. It is but as a friend that I ask again if I may see Miss Trevanion in your presence before — before I go alone into this long exile, to leave, perhaps, my dust in a stranger's soil! Ay, look in my face, — you cannot fear my resolution, my honor, my truth! But once, Lady Ellinor, — but once more. Do I ask in vain?"

Lady Ellinor was evidently much moved. I bent down almost in the attitude of kneeling; and brushing away her tears with one hand, she laid the other on my head tenderly, and said in a very low voice, —

"I entreat you not to ask me; I entreat you not to see my daughter. You have shown that you are not selfish, — conquer yourself still. What if such an interview, however guarded you might be, were but to agitate, unnerve my child, unsettle her peace, prey upon —"

"Oh! do not speak thus, — she did not share my feelings!"

"Could her mother own it if she did? Come, come; remember how young you both are. When you return, all these dreams will be forgotten; then we can meet as before; then I will be your second mother, and again your career shall be my care: for do not think that we shall leave you so long in this exile as you seem to forbode. No, no; it is but an absence, an excursion, — not a search after fortune. Your fortune, — leave that to us when you return!"

"And I am to see her no more!" I murmured, as I rose, and went silently towards the window to conceal my face. The

great struggles in life are limited to moments. In the drooping of the head upon the bosom, in the pressure of the hand upon the brow, we may scarcely consume a second in our threescore years and ten; but what revolutions of our whole being may pass within us while that single sand drops noiseless down to the bottom of the hour-glass!

I came back with firm step to Lady Ellinor, and said calmly: "My reason tells me that you are right, and I submit; forgive me! And do not think me ungrateful and overproud if I add that you must leave me still the object in life that consoles and encourages me through all."

"What object is that?" asked Lady Ellinor, hesitatingly.

"Independence for myself, and ease to those for whom life is still sweet. This is my twofold object; and the means to effect it must be my own heart and my own hands. And now, convey all my thanks to your noble husband, and accept my warm prayers for yourself and *her* — whom I will not name. Farewell, Lady Ellinor!"

"No, do not leave me so hastily; I have many things to discuss with you, — at least to ask of you. Tell me how your father bears his reverse, — tell me at least if there be aught he will suffer us to do for him? There are many appointments in Trevanion's range of influence that would suit even the wilful indolence of a man of letters. Come, be frank with me!"

I could not resist so much kindness; so I sat down, and as collectedly as I could, replied to Lady Ellinor's questions, and sought to convince her that my father only felt his losses so far as they affected me, and that nothing in Trevanion's power was likely to tempt him from his retreat, or calculated to compensate for a change in his habits. Turning at last from my parents, Lady Ellinor inquired for Roland, and on learning that he was with me in town, expressed a strong desire to see him. I told her I would communicate her wish, and she then said thoughtfully, —

"He has a son, I think; and I have heard that there is some unhappy dissension between them."

"Who could have told you that?" I asked in surprise,

knowing how closely Roland had kept the secret of his family afflictions.

"Oh! I heard so from some one who knew Captain Roland, — I forget when and where I heard it; but is it not the fact?"

"My uncle Roland has no son."

"How!"

"His son is dead."

"How such a loss must grieve him!"

I did not speak.

"But is he sure that his son is dead? What joy if he were mistaken, — if the son yet lived!"

"Nay, my uncle has a brave heart, and he is resigned. But, pardon me, have you heard anything of that son?"

"I! — what should I hear? I would fain learn, however, from your uncle himself what he might like to tell me of his sorrows — or if, indeed, there be any chance that —"

"That — what?"

"That — that his son still survives."

"I think not," said I; "and I doubt whether you will learn much from my uncle. Still, there is something in your words that belies their apparent meaning, and makes me suspect that you know more than you will say."

"Diplomatist!" said Lady Ellinor, half smiling; but then, her face settling into a seriousness almost severe, she added, — "it is terrible to think that a father should hate his son!"

"Hate! — Roland *hate* his son! What calumny is this?"

"He does not do so, then! Assure me of that; I shall be so glad to know that I have been misinformed."

"I can tell you this, and no more (for no more do I know), that if ever the soul of a father were wrapped up in a son, — fear, hope, gladness, sorrow, all reflected back on a father's heart from the shadows on a son's life, — Roland was that father while the son lived still."

"I cannot disbelieve you!" exclaimed Lady Ellinor, though in a tone of surprise. "Well, do let me see your uncle."

"I will do my best to induce him to visit you, and learn all that you evidently conceal from me."

Lady Ellinor evasively replied to this insinuation, and shortly afterwards I left that house in which I had known the happiness that brings the folly, and the grief that bequeathes the wisdom.

---

#### CHAPTER IV.

I HAD always felt a warm and almost filial affection for Lady Ellinor, independently of her relationship to Fanny, and of the gratitude with which her kindness inspired me; for there is an affection very peculiar in its nature, and very high in its degree, which results from the blending of two sentiments not often allied, — namely, pity and admiration. It was impossible not to admire the rare gifts and great qualities of Lady Ellinor, and not to feel pity for the cares, anxieties, and sorrows which tormented one who, with all the sensitiveness of woman, went forth into the rough world of man.

My father's confession had somewhat impaired my esteem for Lady Ellinor, and had left on my mind the uneasy impression that she *had* trifled with his deep and Roland's impetuous heart. The conversation that had just passed, allowed me to judge her with more justice, allowed me to see that she had really shared the affection she had inspired in the student, but that ambition had been stronger than love, — an ambition, it might be, irregular, and not strictly feminine, but still of no vulgar nor sordid kind. I gathered, too, from her hints and allusions her true excuse for Roland's misconception of her apparent interest in himself; she had but seen, in the wild energies of the elder brother, some agency by which to arouse the serener faculties of the younger. She had but sought, in the strange comet that flashed before her, to fix a lever that might move the star. Nor could I withhold my reverence from the woman who, not being married precisely from love, had no sooner linked her nature to one worthy of it, than her whole life became as fondly devoted to her husband as if he

had been the object of her first romance and her earliest affections. If even her child was so secondary to her husband; if the fate of that child was but regarded by her as one to be rendered subservient to the grand destinies of Trevanion, — still it was impossible to recognize the error of that conjugal devotion without admiring the wife, though one might condemn the mother. Turning from these meditations, I felt a lover's thrill of selfish joy, amidst all the mournful sorrow comprised in the thought that I should see Fanny no more. Was it true, as Lady Ellinor implied, though delicately, that Fanny still cherished a remembrance of me which a brief interview, a last farewell, might reawaken too dangerously for her peace? Well, that was a thought that it became me not to indulge.

What could Lady Ellinor have heard of Roland and his son? Was it possible that the lost lived still? Asking myself these questions, I arrived at our lodgings, and saw the Captain himself before me, busied with the inspection of sundry specimens of the rude necessities an Australian adventurer requires. There stood the old soldier, by the window, examining narrowly into the temper of hand-saw and tenon-saw, broad-axe and drawing-knife; and as I came up to him, he looked at me from under his black brows with gruff compassion, and said peevishly, —

“Fine weapons these for the son of a gentleman! One bit of steel in the shape of a sword were worth them all.”

“Any weapon that conquers fate is noble in the hands of a brave man, uncle.”

“The boy has an answer for everything,” quoth the Captain, smiling, as he took out his purse and paid the shopman.

When we were alone, I said to him: “Uncle, you must go and see Lady Ellinor; she desires me to tell you so.”

“Pshaw!”

“You will not?”

“No!”

“Uncle, I think that she has something to say to you with regard to — to — pardon me! — to my cousin.”

“To Blanche?”

“No, no; the cousin I never saw.”

Roland turned pale, and sinking down on a chair, faltered out: "To him, — to my son?"

"Yes; but I do not think it is news that will afflict you. Uncle, are you sure that my cousin is dead?"

"What! — how dare you! — who doubts it? Dead, — dead to me forever! Boy, would you have him live to dishonor these gray hairs?"

"Sir, sir, forgive me, — uncle, forgive me. But pray go to see Lady Ellinor; for whatever she has to say, I repeat that I am sure it will be nothing to wound you."

"Nothing to wound me, yet relate to *him*!"

It is impossible to convey to the reader the despair that was in those words.

"Perhaps," said I, after a long pause and in a low voice, for I was awe-stricken, "perhaps — if he be dead — he may have repented of all offence to you before he died."

"Repented — ha, ha!"

"Or if he be not dead —"

"Hush, boy, hush!"

"While there is life, there is hope of repentance."

"Look you, nephew," said the Captain, rising, and folding his arms resolutely on his breast, — "look you, I desired that that name might never be breathed. I have not cursed my son yet; could he come to life — the curse might fall! You do not know what torture your words have given me just when I had opened my heart to another son, and found that son in you. With respect to the lost, I have now but one prayer, and you know it, — the heart-broken prayer that his name never more may come to my ears!"

As he closed these words, to which I ventured no reply, the Captain took long, disordered strides across the room; and suddenly, as if the space imprisoned, or the air stifled him, he seized his hat and hastened into the streets. Recovering my surprise and dismay, I ran after him; but he commanded me to leave him to his own thoughts, in a voice so stern, yet so sad, that I had no choice but to obey. I knew, by my own experience, how necessary is solitude in the moments when grief is strongest and thought most troubled.



## CHAPTER V.

HOURS elapsed, and the Captain had not returned home. I began to feel uneasy, and went forth in search of him, though I knew not whither to direct my steps. I thought it, however, at least probable that he had not been able to resist visiting Lady Ellinor, so I went first to St. James's Square. My suspicions were correct; the Captain had been there two hours before. Lady Ellinor herself had gone out shortly after the Captain left. While the porter was giving me this information, a carriage stopped at the door, and a footman, stepping up, gave the porter a note and a small parcel, seemingly of books, saying simply, "From the Marquis of Castleton." At the sound of that name I turned hastily, and recognized Sir Sedley Beaudesert seated in the carriage and looking out of the window with a dejected, moody expression of countenance, very different from his ordinary aspect, except when the rare sight of a gray hair or a twinge of the toothache reminded him that he was no longer twenty-five. Indeed, the change was so great that I exclaimed dubiously, — "Is that Sir Sedley Beaudesert?" The footman looked at me, and touching his hat, said, with a condescending smile, "Yes, sir, now the Marquis of Castleton."

Then, for the first time since the young lord's death, I remembered Sir Sedley's expressions of gratitude to Lady Castleton and the waters of Ems for having saved him from "that horrible marquise." Meanwhile my old friend had perceived me, exclaiming, —

"What! Mr. Caxton? I am delighted to see you. Open the door, Thomas. Pray come in, come in."

I obeyed, and the new Lord Castleton made room for me by his side.

"Are you in a hurry?" said he. "If so, shall I take you anywhere? If not, give me half an hour of your time while I drive to the city."

As I knew not now in what direction more than another to prosecute my search for the Captain, and as I thought I might as well call at our lodgings to inquire if he had not returned, I answered that I should be very happy to accompany his lordship; "Though the City," said I, smiling, "sounds to me strange upon the lips of Sir Sedley — I beg pardon, I should say of Lord —"

"Don't say any such thing; let me once more hear the grateful sound of Sedley Beaudesert. Shut the door, Thomas: to Gracechurch Street, — Messrs. Fudge & Fidget."

The carriage drove on.

"A sad affliction has befallen me," said the marquis, "and none sympathize with me!"

"Yet all, even unacquainted with the late lord, must have felt shocked at the death of one so young and so full of promise."

"So fitted in every way to bear the burden of the great Castleton name and property. And yet you see it killed him! Ah! if he had been but a simple gentleman, or if he had had a less conscientious desire to do his duties, he would have lived to a good old age. I know what it is already. Oh, if you saw the piles of letters on my table! I positively dread the post. Such colossal improvement on the property which the poor boy had begun, for me to finish. What do you think takes me to Fudge & Fidget's? Sir, they are the agents for an infernal coal-mine which my cousin had re-opened in Durham, to plague my life out with another thirty thousand pounds a-year! How am I to spend the money? — how am I to spend it? There's a cold-blooded head steward who says that charity is the greatest crime a man in high station can commit, — it demoralizes the poor. Then, because some half-a-dozen farmers sent me a round-robin to the effect that their rents were too high, and I wrote them word that the rents should be lowered, there was such a hullabaloo, you would have thought heaven and earth were coming together. 'If

a man in the position of the Marquis of Castleton set the example of letting land below its value, how could the poorer squires in the country exist? Or if they did exist, what injustice to expose them to the charge that they were grasping landlords, vampires, and bloodsuckers! Clearly if Lord Castleton lowered his rents (they were too low already), he struck a mortal blow at the property of his neighbors if they followed his example, or at their characters if they did not.' No man can tell how hard it is to do good, unless fortune gives him a hundred thousand pounds a-year, and says — 'Now, do good with it!' Sedley Beaudesert might follow his whims, and all that would be said against him was 'good-natured, simple fellow!' But if Lord Castleton follow his whims, you would think he was a second Catiline, — unsettling the peace and undermining the prosperity of the entire nation!" Here the wretched man paused, and sighed heavily; then, as his thoughts wandered into a new channel of woe, he resumed: "Ah! if you could but see the forlorn great house I am expected to inhabit, cooped up between dead walls instead of my pretty rooms with the windows full on the park; and the balls I am expected to give; and the parliamentary interest I am to keep up; and the villanous proposal made to me to become a lord-steward or lord-chamberlain, because it suits my rank to be a sort of a servant. Oh, Pisistratus, you lucky dog, — not twenty-one, and with, I dare say, not two hundred pounds a-year in the world!"

Thus bemoaning and bewailing his sad fortunes, the poor marquis ran on, till at last he exclaimed, in a tone of yet deeper despair, —

"And everybody says I must marry too; — that the Castleton line must not be extinct! The Beaudeserts are a good old family eno,' — as old, for what I know, as the Castletons; but the British empire would suffer no loss if they sank into the tomb of the Capulets. But that the Castleton peerage should expire is a thought of crime and woe at which all the mothers of England rise in a phalanx! And so, instead of visiting the sins of the fathers on the sons, it is the father that is to be sacrificed for the benefit of the third and fourth generation!"

Despite my causes for seriousness, I could not help laughing; my companion turned on me a look of reproach.

"At least," said I, composing my countenance, "Lord Castleton has one comfort in his afflictions,—if he must marry, he may choose as he pleases."

"That is precisely what Sedley Beaudesert could, and Lord Castleton cannot do," said the marquis, gravely. "The rank of Sir Sedley Beaudesert was a quiet and comfortable rank,—he might marry a curate's daughter, or a duke's, and please his eye or grieve his heart as the caprice took him. But Lord Castleton must marry, not for a wife, but for a marchioness,—marry some one who will *wear his rank* for him; take the trouble of splendor off his hands, and allow him to retire into a corner and dream that he is Sedley Beaudesert once more! Yes, it must be so,—the crowning sacrifice must be completed at the altar. But a truce to my complaints. Trevanion informs me you are going to Australia,—can that be true?"

"Perfectly true."

"They say there is a sad want of ladies there."

"So much the better,—I shall be all the more steady."

"Well, there's something in that. Have you seen Lady Ellinor?"

"Yes,—this morning."

"Poor woman! A great blow to her,—we have tried to console each other. Fanny, you know, is staying at Oxton, in Surrey, with Lady Castleton,—the poor lady is so fond of her,—and no one has comforted her like Fanny."

"I was not aware that Miss Trevanion was out of town."

"Only for a few days, and then she and Lady Ellinor join Trevanion in the North,—you know he is with Lord N—, settling measures on which— But, alas! they consult me now on those matters,—force their secrets on me. I have, Heaven knows how many votes! Poor me! Upon my word, if Lady Ellinor was a widow, I should certainly make up to her: very clever woman, nothing bores her." (The marquis yawned,—Sir Sedley Beaudesert never yawned.) "Trevanion has provided for his Scotch secretary, and is about to get a

place in the Foreign Office for that young fellow Gower, whom, between you and me, I don't like. But he has bewitched Trevanion!"

"What sort of a person is this Mr. Gower? I remember you said that he was clever and good-looking."

"He is both; but it is not the cleverness of youth, — he is as hard and sarcastic as if he had been cheated fifty times, and jilted a hundred! Neither are his good looks that letter of recommendation which a handsome face is said to be. He has an expression of countenance very much like that of Lord Hertford's pet bloodhound when a stranger comes into the room. Very sleek, handsome dog the bloodhound is certainly, — well-mannered, and I dare say exceedingly tame; but still you have but to look at the corner of the eye to know that it is only the habit of the drawing-room that suppresses the creature's constitutional tendency to seize you by the throat, instead of giving you a paw. Still, this Mr. Gower has a very striking head, — something about it Moorish or Spanish, like a picture by Murillo: I half suspect that he is less a Gower than a gypsy!"

"What!" — I cried, as I listened with rapt and breathless attention to this description. "He is then very dark, with high, narrow forehead, features slightly aquiline, but very delicate, and teeth so dazzling that the whole face seems to sparkle when he smiles, — though it is only the lip that smiles, not the eye."

"Exactly as you say; you have seen him, then?"

"Why, I am not sure, since you say his name is Gower."

"*He* says his name is Gower," returned Lord Castleton, dryly, as he inhaled the Beadesert mixture.

"And where is he now, — with Mr. Trevanion?"

"Yes, I believe so. Ah! here we are — Fudge & Fidget! But perhaps," added Lord Castleton, with a gleam of hope in his blue eye, — "perhaps they are not at home!"

Alas! that was an illusive "imagining," as the poets of the nineteenth century unaffectedly express themselves. Messrs. Fudge & Fidget were never out to such clients as the Marquis of Castleton; with a deep sigh, and an altered expression of

face, the Victim of Fortune slowly descended the steps of the carriage.

"I can't ask you to wait for me," said he; "Heaven only knows how long I shall be kept! Take the carriage where you will, and send it back to me."

"A thousand thanks, my dear lord, I would rather walk. But you will let me call on you before I leave town."

"Let you! — I insist on it. I am still at the old quarters, — under pretence," said the marquis, with a sly twinkle of the eyelid, "that Castleton House wants painting!"

"At twelve to-morrow, then?"

"Twelve to-morrow! Alas! that's just the hour at which Mr. Screw, the agent for the London property (two squares, seven streets, and a lane!) is to call."

"Perhaps two o'clock will suit you better?"

"Two! just the hour at which Mr. Plausible, one of the Castleton members, insists upon telling me why his conscience will not let him vote with Trevanion!"

"Three o'clock?"

"Three! just the hour at which I am to see the secretary of the Treasury, who has promised to relieve Mr. Plausible's conscience! But come and dine with me, — you will meet the executors to the will!"

"Nay, Sir Sedley, — that is, my dear lord, — I will take my chance, and look in after dinner."

"Do so; my guests are not lively! What a firm step the rogue has! Only twenty, I think, — twenty! and not an acre of property to plague him!" So saying, the marquis dolorously shook his head and vanished through the noiseless mahogany doors behind which Messrs. Fudge & Fidget awaited the unhappy man, — with the accounts of the great Castleton coal-mine.

## CHAPTER VI.

ON my way towards our lodgings I resolved to look in at a humble tavern, in the coffee-room of which the Captain and myself habitually dined. It was now about the usual hour in which we took that meal, and he might be there waiting for me. I had just gained the steps of this tavern when a stage-coach came rattling along the pavement and drew up at an inn of more pretensions than that which we favored, situated within a few doors of the latter. As the coach stopped, my eye was caught by the Trevanion livery, which was very peculiar. Thinking I must be deceived, I drew near to the wearer of the livery, who had just descended from the roof, and while he paid the coachman, gave his orders to a waiter who emerged from the inn, — “Half-and-half, cold without!” The tone of the voice struck me as familiar, and the man now looking up, I beheld the features of Mr. Peacock. Yes, unquestionably it was he. The whiskers were shaved; there were traces of powder in the hair or the wig; the livery of the Trevanions (ay, the very livery, — crest-button and all) upon that portly figure, which I had last seen in the more august robes of a beadle. But Mr. Peacock it was, — Peacock travestied, but Peacock still. Before I had recovered my amaze, a woman got out of a cabriolet that seemed to have been in waiting for the arrival of the coach, and hurrying up to Mr. Peacock, said, in the loud, impatient tone common to the fairest of the fair sex, when in haste, “How late you are! — I was just going. I must get back to Oxton to-night.”

Oxton, — Miss Trevanion was staying at Oxton! I was now close behind the pair; I listened with my heart in my ear.

“So you shall, my dear, — so you shall; just come in, will you?”

"No, no; I have only ten minutes to catch the coach. Have you any letter for me from Mr. Gower? How can I be sure, if I don't see it under his own hand, that—"

"Hush!" said Peacock, sinking his voice so low that I could only catch the words, "no names. Letter, pooh! I'll tell you." He then drew her apart and whispered to her for some moments. I watched the woman's face, which was bent towards her companion's, and it seemed to show quick intelligence. She nodded her head more than once, as if in impatient assent to what was said, and after a shaking of hands, hurried off to the cab; then, as if a thought struck her, she ran back, and said,—

"But in case my lady should not go,—if there's any change of plan?"

"There'll be no change, you may be sure. Positively to-morrow,—not too early: you understand?"

"Yes, yes; good-by!" and the woman, who was dressed with a quiet neatness that seemed to stamp her profession as that of an abigail (black cloak with long cape,—of that peculiar silk which seems spun on purpose for ladies'-maids,—bonnet to match, with red and black ribbons), hastened once more away, and in another moment the cab drove off furiously.

What could all this mean? By this time the waiter brought Mr. Peacock the half-and-half. He despatched it hastily, and then strode on towards a neighboring stand of cabriolets. I followed him; and just as, after beckoning one of the vehicles from the stand, he had ensconced himself therein, I sprang up the steps and placed myself by his side. "Now, Mr. Peacock," said I, "you will tell me at once how you come to wear that livery, or I shall order the cabman to drive to Lady Ellinor Trevanion's and ask her that question myself."

"And who the devil! Ah, you're the young gentleman that came to me behind the scenes,—I remember."

"Where to, sir?" asked the cabman.

"To—to London Bridge," said Mr. Peacock.

The man mounted the box and drove on.

"Well, Mr. Peacock, I wait your answer. I guess by your



face that you are about to tell me a lie; I advise you to speak the truth."

"I don't know what business you have to question me," said Mr. Peacock, sullenly; and raising his glance from his own clenched fists, he suffered it to wander over my form with so vindictive a significance that I interrupted the survey by saying, "'Will you encounter the house?' as the Swan interrogatively puts it? Shall I order the cabman to drive to St. James's Square?"

"Oh, you know my weak point, sir! Any man who can quote Will — sweet Will — has me on the hip," rejoined Mr. Peacock, smoothing his countenance and spreading his palms on his knees. "But if a man does fall in the world, and after keeping servants of his own, is obliged to be himself a servant, —

"'I will not shame  
To tell you what I am.'"

"The Swan says, 'To tell you what I *was*,' Mr. Peacock. But enough of this trifling. Who placed you with Mr. Trevanion?"

Mr. Peacock looked down for a moment, and then fixing his eyes on me, said, "Well, I'll tell you: you asked me, when we met last, about a young gentleman, — Mr. — Mr. Vivian."

PISISTRATUS. — "Proceed."

PEACOCK. — "I know you don't want to harm him. Besides, 'He hath a prosperous art,' and one day or other, — mark my words, or rather my friend Will's, —

"'He will bestride this narrow world  
Like a Colossus.'

Upon my life he will, — like a Colossus;

"'And we petty men —'"

PISISTRATUS (savagely). — "Go on with your story."

PEACOCK (snappishly). — "I am going on with it! You put me out. Where was I — oh — ah — yes. I had just been sold up, — not a penny in my pocket; and if you could have

seen my coat, — yet that was better than the small clothes! Well, it was in Oxford Street, — no, it was in the Strand, near the Lowther, —

“‘The sun was in the heavens; and the proud day  
Attended with the pleasures of the world.’”

PISISTRATUS (lowering the glass). — “To St. James’s Square?”

PEACOCK. — “No, no; to London Bridge.

“‘How use doth breed a habit in a man!’”

I will go on, — honor bright. So I met Mr. Vivian, and as he had known me in better days, and has a good heart of his own, he says, —

“‘Horatio, — or I do forget myself.’”

Pisistratus puts his hand on the check-string.

PEACOCK (correcting himself). — “I mean — ‘Why, Johnson, my good fellow.’”

PISISTRATUS. — “Johnson! Oh, that’s your name, — not Peacock.”

PEACOCK. — “Johnson and Peacock both [with dignity]. When you know the world as I do, sir, you will find that it is ill travelling this ‘naughty world’ without a change of names in your portmanteau.

“‘Johnson,’ says he, ‘my good fellow,’ and he pulled out his purse. ‘Sir,’ said I, ‘if, “exempt from public haunt,” I could get something to do when this dross is gone. In London there are sermons in stones, certainly, but not “good in everything,” — an observation I should take the liberty of making to the Swan if he were not now, alas! “the baseless fabric of a vision.”’”

PISISTRATUS. — “Take care!”

PEACOCK (hurriedly). — “Then says Mr. Vivian, ‘If you don’t mind wearing a livery till I can provide for you more suitably, my old friend, there’s a vacancy in the establishment of Mr. Trevanion.’ Sir, I accepted the proposal; and that’s why I wear this livery.”

PISISTRATUS. — "And pray, what business had you with that young woman, whom I take to be Miss Trevanion's maid? And why should she come from Oxton to see you?"

I had expected that these questions would confound Mr. Peacock; but if there were really anything in them to cause embarrassment, the *ci-devant* actor was too practised in his profession to exhibit it. He merely smiled, and smoothing jauntily a very tumbled shirt front, he said, "Oh, sir, fie!

" 'Of this matter  
Is little Cupid's crafty arrow made.'"

If you must know my love affairs, that young woman is, as the vulgar say, my sweetheart."

"Your sweetheart!" I exclaimed, greatly relieved, and acknowledging at once the probability of the statement. "Yet," I added suspiciously, — "yet, if so, why should she expect Mr. Gower to write to her?"

"You're quick of hearing, sir; but though —

" 'All adoration, duty, and observance;  
All humbleness and patience and impatience,' —

the young woman won't marry a livery servant, — proud creature! — very proud! and Mr. Gower, you see, knowing how it was, felt for me, and told her, if I may take such liberty with the Swan, that she should —

" 'Never lie by Johnson's side  
With an unquiet soul,'"

for that he would get me a place in the Stamps! The silly girl said she would have it in black and white, — as if Mr. Gower would write to her!

"And now, sir," continued Mr. Peacock, with a simpler gravity, "you are at liberty, of course, to say what you please to my lady; but I hope you'll not try to take the bread out of my mouth because I wear a livery and am fool enough to be in love with a waiting-woman, — I, sir, who could have married ladies who have played the first parts in life — on the metropolitan stage."

I had nothing to say to these representations, they seemed plausible; and though at first I had suspected that the man had only resorted to the buffoonery of his quotations in order to gain time for invention or to divert my notice from any flaw in his narrative, yet at the close, as the narrative seemed probable, so I was willing to believe the buffoonery was merely characteristic. I contented myself, therefore, with asking —

“Where do you come from now?”

“From Mr. Trevanion, in the country, with letters to Lady Ellinor.”

“Oh! and so the young woman knew you were coming to town?”

“Yes, sir; Mr. Trevanion told me, some days ago, the day I should have to start.”

“And what do you and the young woman propose doing to-morrow if there is no change of plan?”

Here I certainly thought there was a slight, scarce perceptible, alteration in Mr. Peacock’s countenance; but he answered readily, “To-morrow, a little assignation, if we can both get out, —

“‘Woo me, now I am in a holiday humor,  
And like enough to consent.’”

Swan again, sir.”

“Humph! so then Mr. Gower and Mr. Vivian are the same person?”

Peacock hesitated. “That’s not *my* secret, sir; ‘I am combined by a sacred vow.’ You are too much the gentleman to peep through the blanket of the dark and to ask me, who wear the whips and stripes — I mean the plush small-clothes and shoulder-knots — the secrets of another gent to whom ‘my services are bound.’”

How a man past thirty foils a man scarcely twenty! What superiority the mere fact of living-on gives to the dullest dog! I bit my lip and was silent.

“And,” pursued Mr. Peacock, “if you knew how the Mr. Vivian you inquired after loves you! When I told him, incidentally, how a young gentleman had come behind the scenes

to inquire after him, he made me describe you, and then said, quite mournfully, 'If ever I am what I hope to become, how happy I shall be to shake that kind hand once more,' — very words, sir, honor bright!

" 'I think there's ne'er a man in Christendom  
Can lesser hide his hate or love than he.' "

And if Mr. Vivian has some reason to keep himself concealed still; if his fortune or ruin depend on your not divulging his secret for a while, — I can't think you are the man he need fear. 'Pon my life, —

" 'I wish I was as sure of a good dinner,' "

as the Swan touchingly exclaims. I dare swear that was a wish often on the Swan's lips in the privacy of his domestic life!"

My heart was softened, not by the pathos of the much profaned and desecrated Swan, but by Mr. Peacock's unadorned repetition of Vivian's words. I turned my face from the sharp eyes of my companion; the cab now stopped at the foot of London Bridge.

I had no more to ask, yet still there was some uneasy curiosity in my mind, which I could hardly define to myself, — was it not jealousy? Vivian so handsome and so daring, — *he* at least might see the great heiress; Lady Ellinor perhaps thought of no danger there. But — I — I was a lover still, and — nay, such thoughts were folly indeed!

"My man," said I to the ex-comedian, "I neither wish to harm Mr. Vivian (if I am so to call him), nor you who imitate him in the variety of your names. But I tell you fairly that I do not like your being in Mr. Trevanion's employment, and I advise you to get out of it as soon as possible. I say nothing more as yet, for I shall take time to consider well what you have told me."

With that I hastened away, and Mr. Peacock continued his solitary journey over London Bridge.

## CHAPTER VII.

AMIDST all that lacerated my heart or tormented my thoughts that eventful day, I felt at least one joyous emotion when, on entering our little drawing-room, I found my uncle seated there.

The Captain had placed before him on the table a large Bible, borrowed from the landlady. He never travelled, to be sure, without his own Bible; but the print of that was small, and the Captain's eyes began to fail him at night. So this was a Bible with large type, and a candle was placed on either side of it; and the Captain leaned his elbows on the table, and both his hands were tightly clasped upon his forehead, — tightly, as if to shut out the tempter, and *force* his whole soul upon the page.

He sat the image of iron courage; in every line of that rigid form there was resolution: "I will *not* listen to my heart; I *will* read the Book, and learn to suffer as becomes a Christian man."

There was such a pathos in the stern sufferer's attitude that it spoke those words as plainly as if his lips had said them.

Old soldier, thou hast done a soldier's part in many a bloody field; but if I could make visible to the world thy brave soldier's soul, I would paint thee as I saw thee then! — Out on this tyro's hand!

At the movement I made, the Captain looked up, and the strife he had gone through was written upon his face.

"It has done me good," said he simply, and he closed the book.

I drew my chair near to him and hung my arm over his shoulder.

"No cheering news, then?" asked I in a whisper.

Roland shook his head, and gently laid his finger on his lips.

## CHAPTER VIII.

It was impossible for me to intrude upon Roland's thoughts, whatever their nature, with a detail of those circumstances which had roused in me a keen and anxious interest in things apart from his sorrow.

Yet as "restless I rolled around my weary bed," and revolved the renewal of Vivian's connection with a man of character so equivocal as Peacock; the establishment of an able and unscrupulous tool of his own in the service of Trevanion; the care with which he had concealed from me his change of name, and his intimacy at the very house to which I had frankly offered to present him; the familiarity which his creature had contrived to effect with Miss Trevanion's maid; the words that had passed between them, — plausibly accounted for, it is true, yet still suspicious; and, above all, my painful recollections of Vivian's reckless ambition and unprincipled sentiments, — nay, the effect that a few random words upon Fanny's fortune, and the luck of winning an heiress, had sufficed to produce upon his heated fancy and audacious temper, — when all these thoughts came upon me, strong and vivid, in the darkness of night, I longed for some confidant, more experienced in the world than myself, to advise me as to the course I ought to pursue. Should I warn Lady Ellinor? But of what? The character of the servant, or the designs of the fictitious Gower? Against the first I could say, if nothing very positive, still enough to make it prudent to dismiss him. But of Gower or Vivian, what could I say without — not indeed betraying his confidence, for that he had never given me — but without belying the professions of friendship that I myself had lavishly made to him? Perhaps, after all, he might have disclosed whatever were his real secrets to Trevanion; and, if not, I might indeed ruin his prospects by revealing the aliases

he assumed. But wherefore reveal, and wherefore warn? Because of suspicions that I could not myself analyze, — suspicions founded on circumstances most of which had already been seemingly explained away. Still, when morning came, I was irresolute what to do; and after watching Roland's countenance, and seeing on his brow so great a weight of care that I had no option but to postpone the confidence I pinned to place in his strong understanding and unerring sense of honor, I wandered out, hoping that in the fresh air I might re-collect my thoughts and solve the problem that perplexed me. I had enough to do in sundry small orders for my voyage, and commissions for Bolding, to occupy me some hours. And, this business done, I found myself moving westward; mechanically, as it were, I had come to a kind of half-and-half resolution to call upon Lady Ellinor and question her, carelessly and incidentally, both about Gower and the new servant admitted to the household.

Thus I found myself in Regent Street, when a carriage, borne by post-horses, whirled rapidly over the pavement, scattering to the right and left all humbler equipages, and hurried, as if on an errand of life and death, up the broad thoroughfare leading into Portland Place. But rapidly as the wheels dashed by, I had seen distinctly the face of Fanny Trevanion in the carriage; and that face wore a strange expression, which seemed to me to speak of anxiety and grief; and by her side — Was not that the woman I had seen with Peacock? I did not see the face of the woman, but I thought I recognized the cloak, the bonnet, and peculiar turn of the head. If I could be mistaken there, I was not mistaken at least as to the servant on the seat behind. Looking back at a butcher's boy who had just escaped being run over, and was revenging himself by all the imprecations the *Diræ* of London slang could suggest, the face of Mr. Peacock was exposed in full to my gaze.

My first impulse, on recovering my surprise, was to spring after the carriage; in the haste of that impulse, I cried "Stop!" But the carriage was out of sight in a moment, and my word was lost in air. Full of presentiments of some evil, —



I knew not what, — I then altered my course, and stopped not till I found myself, panting and out of breath, in St. James's Square — at the door of Trevanion's house — in the hall. The porter had a newspaper in his hand as he admitted me.

"Where is Lady Ellinor? I must see her instantly."

"No worse news of master, I hope, sir?"

"Worse news of what, of whom? Of Mr. Trevanion?"

"Did you not know he was suddenly taken ill, sir, — that a servant came express to say so last night? Lady Ellinor went off at ten o'clock to join him."

"At ten o'clock last night?"

"Yes, sir; the servant's account alarmed her ladyship so much."

"The new servant, who had been recommended by Mr. Gower?"

"Yes, sir, — Henry," answered the porter, staring at me. "Please, sir, here is an account of master's attack in the paper. I suppose Henry took it to the office before he came here, — which was very wrong in him; but I am afraid he's a very foolish fellow."

"Never mind that. Miss Trevanion, — I saw her just now, — *she* did not go with her mother: where was she going, then?"

"Why, sir, — but pray step into the parlor."

"No, no; speak!"

"Why, sir, before Lady Ellinor set out she was afraid that there *might* be something in the papers to alarm Miss Fanny, and so she sent Henry down to Lady Castleton's to beg her ladyship to make as light of it as she could; but it seems that Henry blabbed the worst to Mrs. Mole."

"Who is Mrs. Mole?"

"Miss Trevanion's maid, sir, — a new maid; and Mrs. Mole blabbed to my young lady, and so she took fright, and insisted on coming to town. And Lady Castleton, who is ill herself in bed, could not keep her, I suppose, — especially as Henry said, though he ought to have known better, 'that she would be in time to arrive before my lady set off.' Poor Miss Trevanion was so disappointed when she found her mamma gone. And

then she would order fresh horses and go on, though Mrs. Bates (the housekeeper, you know, sir) was very angry with Mrs. Mole, who encouraged Miss; and —”

“Good heavens! Why did not Mrs. Bates go with her?”

“Why, sir, you know how old Mrs. Bates is, and my young lady is always so kind that she would not hear of it, as she is going to travel night and day; and Mrs. Mole said she had gone all over the world with her last lady, and that —”

“I see it all. Where is Mr. Gower?”

“Mr. Gower, sir!”

“Yes! Can’t you answer?”

“Why, with Mr. Trevanion, I believe, sir.”

“In the North, — what is the address!”

“Lord N——, C—— Hall, near W——.”

I heard no more.

The conviction of some villanous snare struck me as with the swiftness and force of lightning. Why, if Trevanion were really ill, had the false servant concealed it from me? Why suffered me to waste his time, instead of hastening to Lady Ellinor? How, if Mr. Trevanion’s *sudden* illness had brought the man to London, — how had he known so long beforehand (as he himself told me, and his appointment with the waiting-woman proved) the day he should arrive? Why now, if there were no design of which Miss Trevanion was the object, why so frustrate the provident foresight of her mother, and take advantage of the natural yearning of affection, the quick impulse of youth, to hurry off a girl whose very station forbade her to take such a journey without suitable protection, — against what must be the wish, and what clearly were the instructions, of Lady Ellinor? Alone, worse than alone! Fanny Trevanion was then in the hands of two servants who were the instruments and confidants of an adventurer like Vivian; and that conference between those servants, those broken references to the morrow coupled with the name Vivian had assumed, — needed the unerring instincts of love more cause for terror? — terror the darker because the exact shape it should assume was obscure and indistinct.

I sprang from the house.

I hastened into the Haymarket, summoned a cabriolet, drove home as fast as I could (for I had no money about me for the journey I meditated), sent the servant of the lodging to engage a chaise-and-four, rushed into the room, where Roland fortunately still was, and exclaimed, — "Uncle, come with me! Take money, plenty of money! Some villany I know, though I can't explain it, has been practised on the Trevanions. We may defeat it yet. I will tell you all by the way. Come, come!"

"Certainly. But villany, — and to people of such a station — pooh! collect yourself. Who is the villain?"

"Oh, the man I had loved as a friend; the man whom I myself helped to make known to Trevanion, — Vivian, Vivian!"

"Vivian! Ah, the youth I have heard you speak of! But how? Villany to whom, — to Trevanion?"

"You torture me with your questions. Listen: this Vivian (I know him), — he has introduced into the house, as a servant, an agent capable of any trick and fraud; that servant has aided him to win over her maid, — Fanny's — Miss Trevanion's. Miss Trevanion is an heiress, Vivian an adventurer. My head swims round; I cannot explain now. Ha! I will write a line to Lord Castleton, — tell him my fears and suspicions; he will follow us, I know, or do what is best."

I drew ink and paper towards me and wrote hastily. My uncle came round and looked over my shoulder.

Suddenly he exclaimed, seizing my arm: "Gower, Gower! What name is this? You said Vivian."

"Vivian or Gower, — the same person."

My uncle hurried out of the room. It was natural that he should leave me to make our joint and brief preparations for departure.

I finished my letter, sealed it, and when, five minutes afterwards, the chaise came to the door, I gave it to the hostler who accompanied the horses, with injunctions to deliver it forthwith to Lord Castleton himself.

My uncle now descended, and stepped from the threshold with a firm stride. "Comfort yourself," he said, as he entered

the chaise, into which I had already thrown myself. "We may be mistaken yet."

"Mistaken! You do not know this young man. He has every quality that could entangle a girl like Fanny, and not, I fear, one sentiment of honor that would stand in the way of his ambition. I judge him now as by a revelation — too late — Oh Heavens, if it be too late!"

A groan broke from Roland's lips. I heard in it a proof of his sympathy with my emotion, and grasped his hand: it was as cold as the hand of the dead.

## PART XV.

## CHAPTER I.

THERE would have been nothing in what had chanced to justify the suspicions that tortured me, but for my impressions as to the character of Vivian.

Reader, hast thou not, in the easy, careless sociability of youth, formed acquaintance with some one in whose more engaging or brilliant qualities thou hast, — not lost that dislike to defects or vices which is natural to an age when, even while we err, we adore what is good, and glow with enthusiasm for the ennobling sentiment and the virtuous deed, — no, happily, not lost dislike to what is bad, nor thy quick sense of it, — but conceived a keen interest in the struggle between the bad that revolted, and the good that attracted thee, in thy companion? Then, perhaps, thou hast lost sight of him for a time; suddenly thou hearest that he has done something out of the way of ordinary good or commonplace evil; and in either — the good or the evil — thy mind runs rapidly back over its old reminiscences, and of either thou sayest, “How natural! Only So-and-so could have done this thing!”

Thus I felt respecting Vivian. The most remarkable qualities in his character were his keen power of calculation and his unhesitating audacity, — qualities that lead to fame or to infamy, according to the cultivation of the moral sense and the direction of the passions. Had I recognized those qualities in some agency apparently of good, — and it seemed yet doubtful if Vivian were the agent, — I should have cried, “It is he; and the better angel has triumphed!” With the same (alas! with a yet more impulsive) quickness, when the agency was of evil,

and the agent equally dubious, I felt that the qualities revealed the man, and that the demon had prevailed.

Mile after mile, stage after stage, were passed on the dreary, interminable, high north road. I narrated to my companion, more intelligibly than I had yet done, my causes for apprehension. The Captain at first listened eagerly, then checked me on the sudden. "There may be nothing in all this," he cried. "Sir, we must be men here, — have our heads cool, our reason clear; stop!" And leaning back in the chaise, Roland refused further conversation, and as the night advanced, seemed to sleep. I took pity on his fatigue, and devoured my heart in silence. At each stage we heard of the party of which we were in pursuit. At the first stage or two we were less than an hour behind; gradually, as we advanced, we lost ground, despite the most lavish liberality to the post-boys. I supposed, at length, that the mere circumstance of changing, at each relay, the chaise as well as the horses, was the cause of our comparative slowness; and on saying this to Roland as we were changing horses, somewhere about midnight, he at once called up the master of the inn and gave him his own price for permission to retain the chaise till the journey's end. This was so unlike Roland's ordinary thrift, whether dealing with my money or his own, — so unjustified by the fortune of either, — that I could not help muttering something in apology.

"Can you guess why I was a miser?" said Roland, calmly.

"A miser? Anything but that! Only prudent, — military men often are so."

"I was a miser," repeated the Captain, with emphasis. "I began the habit first when my son was but a child. I thought him high-spirited, and with a taste for extravagance. 'Well,' said I to myself, 'I will save for him; boys will be boys.' Then, afterwards, when he was no more a child (at least he began to have the vices of a man), I said to myself, 'Patience! he may reform still; if not, I will save money, that I may have power over his self-interest, since I have none over his heart. I will bribe him into honor!' And then — and then — God saw that I was very proud, and I was punished. Tell them to drive faster, — faster; why, this is a snail's pace!"

All that night, all the next day, till towards the evening, we pursued our journey, without pause or other food than a crust of bread and a glass of wine. But we now picked up the ground we had lost, and gained upon the carriage. The night had closed in when we arrived at the stage at which the route to Lord N ——'s branched from the direct north road. And here, making our usual inquiry, my worst suspicions were confirmed. The carriage we pursued had changed horses an hour before, but had not taken the way to Lord N ——'s, continuing the direct road into Scotland. The people of the inn had not seen the lady in the carriage, for it was already dark; but the man-servant (whose livery they described) had ordered the horses.

The last hope that, in spite of appearances, no treachery had been designed, here vanished. The Captain at first seemed more dismayed than myself, but he recovered more quickly. "We will continue the journey on horseback," he said; and hurried to the stables. All objections vanished at the sight of his gold. In five minutes we were in the saddle, with a postilion, also mounted, to accompany us. We did the next stage in little more than two thirds of the time which we should have occupied in our former mode of travel, — indeed I found it hard to keep pace with Roland. We remounted; we were only twenty-five minutes behind the carriage, — we felt confident that we should overtake it before it could reach the next town. The moon was up: we could see far before us; we rode at full speed. Milestone after milestone glided by; the carriage was not visible. We arrived at the post-town or rather village; it contained but one posting-house. We were long in knocking up the hostlers: no carriage had arrived just before us; no carriage had passed the place since noon.

What mystery was this?

"Back, back, boy!" said Roland, with a soldier's quick wit, and spurring his jaded horse from the yard. "They will have taken a cross-road or by-lane. We shall track them by the hoofs of the horses or the print of the wheels."

Our postilion grumbled, and pointed to the panting sides of

our horses. For answer, Roland opened his hand — full of gold. Away we went back through the dull, sleeping village, back into the broad moonlit thoroughfare. We came to a cross-road to the right, but the track we pursued still led us straight on. We had measured back nearly half the way to the post-town at which we had last changed, when lo! there emerged from a by-lane two postilions and their horses!

At that sight our companion, shouting loud, pushed on before us and hailed his fellows. A few words gave us the information we sought. A wheel had come off the carriage just by the turn of the road, and the young lady and her servants had taken refuge in a small inn not many yards down the lane. The man-servant had dismissed the post-boys after they had baited their horses, saying they were to come again in the morning and bring a blacksmith to repair the wheel.

"How came the wheel off?" asked Roland, sternly.

"Why, sir, the linch-pin was all rotted away, I suppose, and came out."

"Did the servant get off the dickey after you set out, and before the accident happened?"

"Why, yes. He said the wheels were catching fire, that they had not the patent axles, and he had forgot to have them oiled."

"And he looked at the wheels, and shortly afterwards the linch-pin came out? Eh?"

"Anan, sir!" said the post-boy, staring; "why, and indeed so it was!"

"Come on, Pisistratus, we are in time; but pray God, pray God that —" The Captain dashed his spurs into the horse's sides, and the rest of his words were lost to me.

A few yards back from the causeway, a broad patch of green before it, stood the inn, — a sullen, old-fashioned building of cold gray stone, looking livid in the moonlight, with black firs at one side throwing over half of it a dismal shadow. So solitary, — not a house, not a hut near it! If they who kept the inn were such that villany might reckon on their connivance, and innocence despair of their aid, there was no neighborhood to alarm, no refuge at hand. The spot was well chosen.



The doors of the inn were closed ; there was a light in the room below : but the outside shutters were drawn over the windows on the first floor. My uncle paused a moment, and said to the postilion, —

“Do you know the back way to the premises ? ”

“No, sir ; I does n’t often come by this way, and they be new folks that have taken the house, — and I hear it don’t prosper over much.”

“Knock at the door ; we will stand a little aside while you do so. If any one ask what you want, merely say you would speak to the servant, — that you have found a purse. Here, hold up mine.”

Roland and I had dismounted, and my uncle drew me close to the wall by the door, observing that my impatience ill submitted to what seemed to me idle preliminaries.

“Hist ! ” whispered he. “If there be anything to conceal within, they will not answer the door till some one has reconnoitred ; were they to see us, they would refuse to open. But seeing only the post-boy, whom they will suppose at first to be one of those who brought the carriage, they will have no suspicion. Be ready to rush in the moment the door is unbarred.”

My uncle’s veteran experience did not deceive him. There was a long silence before any reply was made to the post-boy’s summons ; the light passed to and fro rapidly across the window, as if persons were moving within. Roland made sign to the post-boy to knock again. He did so twice, thrice ; and at last, from an attic window in the roof, a head obtruded and a voice cried, “Who are you ? What do you want ? ”

“I ’m the post-boy at the Red Lion ; I want to see the servant with the brown carriage : I have found this purse ! ”

“Oh ! that’s all ; wait a bit.”

The head disappeared. We crept along under the projecting eaves of the house ; we heard the bar lifted from the door, the door itself cautiously opened : one spring, and I stood within, and set my back to the door to admit Roland.

“Ho, help ! thieves ! help ! ” cried a loud voice, and I felt a hand gripe at my throat. I struck at random in the dark,

and with effect, for my blow was followed by a groan and a curse.

Roland, meanwhile, had detected a ray through the chinks of a door in the hall, and, guided by it, found his way into the room at the window of which we had seen the light pass and go, while without. As he threw the door open, I bounded after him and saw, in a kind of parlor, two females, — the one a stranger, no doubt the hostess; the other the treacherous abigail. Their faces evinced their terror.

"Woman," I said, seizing the last, "where is Miss Trevanion?" Instead of replying, the woman set up a loud shriek. Another light now gleamed from the staircase which immediately faced the door, and I heard a voice, that I recognized as Peacock's, cry out, "Who's there? — What's the matter?"

I made a rush at the stairs. A burly form (that of the landlord, who had recovered from my blow) obstructed my way for a moment, to measure its length on the floor at the next. I was at the top of the stairs; Peacock recognized me, recoiled, and extinguished the light. Oaths, cries, and shrieks now resounded through the dark. Amidst them all I suddenly heard a voice exclaim, "Here, here! help!" It was the voice of Fanny. I made my way to the right, whence the voice came, and received a violent blow. Fortunately it fell on the arm which I extended, as men do who feel their way through the dark. It was not the right arm, and I seized and closed on my assailant. Roland now came up, a candle in his hand; and at that sight my antagonist, who was no other than Peacock, slipped from me and made a rush at the stairs. But the Captain caught him with his grasp of iron. Fearing nothing for Roland in a contest with any single foe, and all my thoughts bent on the rescue of her whose voice again broke on my ear, I had already (before the light of the candle which Roland held went out in the struggle between himself and Peacock) caught sight of a door at the end of the passage, and thrown myself against it: it was locked, but it shook and groaned to my pressure.

"Hold back, whoever you are," cried a voice from the

room within, far different from that wail of distress which had guided my steps. "Hold back at the peril of your life!"

The voice, the threat, redoubled my strength: the door flew from its fastenings. I stood in the room. I saw Fanny at my feet, clasping my hands; then raising herself, she hung on my shoulder and murmured "Saved!" Opposite to me, his face deformed by passion, his eyes literally blazing with savage fire, his nostrils distended, his lips apart, stood the man I have called Francis Vivian.

"Fanny — Miss Trevanion — what outrage, what villany is this? You have not met this man at your free choice, — oh, speak!" Vivian sprang forward.

"Question no one but me. Unhand that lady, — she is my betrothed; shall be my wife."

"No, no, no, — don't believe him," cried Fanny; "I have been betrayed by my own servants, — brought here, I know not how! I heard my father was ill; I was on my way to him: that man met me here and dared to —"

"Miss Trevanion — yes, I dared to say I loved you!"

"Protect me from him! You will protect me from him?"

"No, madam!" said a voice behind me, in a deep tone; "it is I who claim the right to protect you from that man; it is I who now draw around you the arm of one sacred, even to him; it is I who, from this spot, launch upon his head — a father's curse. Violator of the hearth, baffled ravisher, go thy way to the doom which thou hast chosen for thyself! God will be merciful to me yet, and give me a grave before thy course find its close in the hulks or at the gallows!"

A sickness came over me, a terror froze my veins; I reeled back, and leaned for support against the wall. Roland had passed his arm round Fanny, and she, frail and trembling, clung to his broad breast, looking fearfully up to his face. And never in that face, ploughed by deep emotions and dark with unutterable sorrows, had I seen an expression so grand in its wrath, so sublime in its despair. Following the direction of his eye, stern and fixed as the look of one who prophesies a destiny and denounces a doom, I shivered as I gazed upon

the son. His whole frame seemed collapsed and shrinking, as if already withered by the curse; a ghastly whiteness overspread the cheek, usually glowing with the dark bloom of Oriental youth; the knees knocked together; and at last, with a faint exclamation of pain, like the cry of one who receives a death-blow, he bowed his face over his clasped hands, and so remained — still, but cowering.

Instinctively I advanced, and placed myself between the father and the son, murmuring, "Spare him; see, his own heart crushes him down." Then stealing towards the son, I whispered, "Go, go; the crime was not committed, the curse can be recalled." But my words touched a wrong chord in that dark and rebellious nature. The young man withdrew his hands hastily from his face and reared his front in passionate defiance.

Waving me aside, he cried, "Away! I acknowledge no authority over my actions and my fate; I allow no mediator between this lady and myself. Sir," he continued, gazing gloomily on his father, — "sir, you forget our compact. Our ties were severed, your power over me annulled; I resigned the name you bear: to you I was, and am still, as the dead. I deny your right to step between me and the object dearer to me than life.

"Oh!" — and here he stretched forth his hands towards Fanny — "Oh, Miss Trevanion, do not refuse me one prayer, however you condemn me. Let me see you alone but for one moment; let me but prove to you that, guilty as I may have been, it was not from the base motives you will hear imputed to me, — that it was not the heiress I sought to decoy, it was the woman I sought to win; oh, hear me —"

"No, no," murmured Fanny, clinging closer to Roland; "do not leave me. If, as it seems, he is your son, I forgive him; but let him go, — I shudder at his very voice!"

"Would you have me, indeed, annihilate the memory of the bond between us?" said Roland, in a hollow voice; "would you have me see in you only the vile thief, the lawless felon, — deliver you up to justice, or strike you to my feet? Let the memory still save you, and begone!"

Again I caught hold of the guilty son, and again he broke from my grasp.

"It is," he said, folding his arms deliberately on his breast, "it is for me to command in this house; all who are within it must submit to my orders. You, sir, who hold reputation, name, and honor at so high a price, how can you fail to see that you would rob them from the lady whom you would protect from the insult of my affection? How would the world receive the tale of your rescue of Miss Trevanion; how believe that — Oh! pardon me, madam — Miss Trevanion — Fanny — pardon me — I am mad. Only hear me, — alone, alone; and then if you too say, 'Begone!' I submit without a murmur: I allow no arbiter but you."

But Fanny still clung closer and closer still to Roland. At that moment I heard voices and the trampling of feet below; and supposing that the accomplices in this villany were mustering courage perhaps to mount to the assistance of their employer, I lost all the compassion that had hitherto softened my horror of the young man's crime, and all the awe with which that confession had been attended. I therefore this time seized the false Vivian with a gripe that he could no longer shake off, and said sternly, —

"Beware how you aggravate your offence! If strife ensues, it will not be between father and son, and —"

Fanny sprang forward. "Do not provoke this bad, dangerous man! I fear him not. Sir, I *will* hear you, and alone."

"Never!" cried I and Roland simultaneously.

Vivian turned his look fiercely to me, and with a sullen bitterness to his father; and then, as if resigning his former prayer, he said: "Well, then, be it so; even in the presence of those who judge me so severely, I will speak at least." He paused, and throwing into his voice a passion that, had the repugnance at his guilt been less, would not have been without pathos, he continued to address Fanny: "I own that when I first saw you I might have thought of love as the poor and ambitious think of the way to wealth and power. Those thoughts vanished, and nothing remained in my heart but love and madness. I was as a man in a delirium when I planned

this snare. I knew but one object, saw but one heavenly vision. Oh! mine — mine at least in that vision — are you indeed lost to me forever?"

There was that in this man's tone and manner which, whether arising from accomplished hypocrisy or actual, if perverted, feeling, would, I thought, find its way at once to the heart of a woman who, however wronged, had once loved him; and with a cold misgiving, I fixed my eyes on Miss Trevanion. Her look, as she turned with a visible tremor, suddenly met mine, and I believe that she discerned my doubt; for after suffering her eyes to rest on my own with something of mournful reproach, her lips curved as with the pride of her mother, and for the first time in my life I saw anger on her brow.

"It is well, sir, that you have thus spoken to me in the presence of others, for in their presence I call upon you to say, by that honor which the son of this gentleman may for a while forget, but cannot wholly forfeit, — I call upon you to say whether, by deed, word, or sign, I, Frances Trevanion, ever gave you cause to believe that I returned the feeling you say you entertained for me, or encouraged you to dare this attempt to place me in your power."

"No!" cried Vivian, readily, but with a writhing lip, — "no; but where I loved so deeply, perilled all my fortune for one fair and free occasion to tell you so alone, I would not think that such love could meet only loathing and disdain. What! has Nature shaped me so unkindly that where I love no love can reply? What! has the accident of birth shut me out from the right to woo and mate with the high-born? For the last, at least that gentleman in justice should tell you, since it has been his care to instil the haughty lesson into me, that my lineage is one that befits lofty hopes and warrants fearless ambition. My hopes, my ambition — they were you! Oh, Miss Trevanion, it is true that to win you I would have braved the world's laws, defied every foe save him who now rises before me. Yet, believe me, believe me, had I won what I dared to aspire to, you would not have been disgraced by your choice; and the name, for which I thank not my father,

should not have been despised by the woman who pardoned my presumption, nor by the man who now tramples on my anguish and curses me in my desolation."

Not by a word had Roland sought to interrupt his son, — nay, by a feverish excitement which my heart understood in its secret sympathy, he had seemed eagerly to court every syllable that could extenuate the darkness of the offence, or even imply some less sordid motive for the baseness of the means. But as the son now closed with the words of unjust reproach and the accents of fierce despair, — closed a defence that showed, in its false pride and its perverted eloquence, so utter a blindness to every principle of that Honor which had been the father's idol, — Roland placed his hand before the eyes that he had previously, as if spell-bound, fixed on the hardened offender, and once more drawing Fanny towards him, said, —

"His breath pollutes the air that innocence and honesty should breathe. He says all in this house are at his command, — why do we stay? Let us go." He turned towards the door, and Fanny with him.

Meanwhile the louder sounds below had been silenced for some moments; but I heard a step in the hall. Vivian started, and placed himself before us.

"No, no; you cannot leave me thus, Miss Trevanion. I resign you, — be it so; I do not even ask for pardon. But to leave this house thus, without carriage, without attendants, without explanation! The blame falls on me, — it shall do so; but at least vouchsafe me the right to repair what I yet can repair of the wrong, to protect all that is left to me, — your name."

As he spoke he did not perceive (for he was facing us, and with his back to the door) that a new actor had noiselessly entered on the scene, and, pausing by the threshold, heard his last words.

"The name of Miss Trevanion, sir, — and from what?" asked the new comer as he advanced and surveyed Vivian with a look that, but for its quiet, would have seemed disdain.

"Lord Castleton!" exclaimed Fanny, lifting up the face she had buried in her hands.

Vivian recoiled in dismay, and gnashed his teeth.

"Sir," said the marquis, "I await your reply; for not even you, in my presence, shall imply that one reproach can be attached to the name of that lady."

"Oh, moderate your tone to me, my Lord Castleton!" cried Vivian; "in you, at least, there is one man I am not forbidden to brave and defy. It was to save that lady from the cold ambition of her parents; it was to prevent the sacrifice of her youth and beauty to one whose sole merits are his wealth and his titles,—it was this that impelled me to the crime I have committed; this that hurried me on to risk all for one hour when youth at least could plead its cause to youth; and this gives me now the power to say that it does rest with me to protect the name of the lady, whom your very servility to that world which you have made your idol forbids you to claim from the heartless ambition that would sacrifice the daughter to the vanity of the parents. Ha! the future Marchioness of Castleton on her way to Scotland with a penniless adventurer! Ha! if my lips are sealed, who but I can seal the lips of those below in my secret? The secret shall be kept, but on this condition,—you shall not triumph where I have failed; I may lose what I adored, but I do not resign it to another. Ha! have I foiled you, my Lord Castleton? Ha, ha!"

"No, sir; and I almost forgive you the villany you have *not* effected, for informing me, for the first time, that had I presumed to address Miss Trevanion, her parents at least would have pardoned the presumption. Trouble not yourself as to what your accomplices may say. They have already confessed their infamy and your own. Out of my path, sir!"

Then, with the benign look of a father and the lofty grace of a prince, Lord Castleton advanced to Fanny. Looking round with a shudder, she hastily placed her hand in his, and by so doing perhaps prevented some violence on the part of Vivian, whose heaving breast and eye bloodshot, and still



unquailing, showed how little even shame had subdued his fiercer passions. But he made no offer to detain them, and his tongue seemed to cleave to his lips. Now, as Fanny moved to the door she passed Roland, who stood motionless and with vacant looks, like an image of stone; and with a beautiful tenderness, for which (even at this distant date, recalling it) I say, "God requite thee, Fanny," she laid her other hand on Roland's arm and said, "Come, too: *your* arm still."

But Roland's limbs trembled and refused to stir; his head, relaxing, drooped on his breast, his eyes closed. Even Lord Castleton was so struck (though unable to guess the true and terrible cause of his dejection) that he forgot his desire to hasten from the spot, and cried with all his kindness of heart, "You are ill, you faint; give him your arm, Pisistratus."

"It is nothing," said Roland, feebly, as he leaned heavily on my arm while I turned back my head, with all the bitterness of that reproach which filled my heart speaking in the eyes that sought *him* whose place should have been where mine now was. And oh!—thank Heaven, thank Heaven!—the look was not in vain. In the same moment the son was at the father's knees.

"Oh, pardon, pardon! Wretch, lost wretch though I be, I bow my head to the curse. Let it fall,—but on me, and on me only; not on your own heart too."

Fanny burst into tears, sobbing out, "Forgive him, as I do."

Roland did not heed her.

"He thinks that the heart was not shattered before the curse could come," he said, in a voice so weak as to be scarcely audible. Then, raising his eyes to heaven, his lips moved as if he prayed inly. Pausing, he stretched his hands over his son's head, and averting his face, said, "I revoke the curse. Pray to thy God for pardon."

Perhaps not daring to trust himself further, he then made a violent effort and hurried from the room.

We followed silently. When we gained the end of the passage, the door of the room we had left closed with a sullen jar.

As the sound smote on my ear, with it came so terrible a sense of the solitude upon which that door had closed, so keen and quick an apprehension of some fearful impulse, suggested by passions so fierce to a condition so forlorn, that instinctively I stopped, and then hurried back to the chamber. The lock of the door having been previously forced, there was no barrier to oppose my entrance. I advanced, and beheld a spectacle of such agony as can only be conceived by those who have looked on the grief which takes no fortitude from reason, no consolation from conscience, — the grief which tells us what would be the earth were man abandoned to his passions, and the CHANCE of the atheist reigned alone in the merciless heavens. Pride humbled to the dust; ambition shivered into fragments; love (or the passion mistaken for it) blasted into ashes; life, at the first onset, bereaved of its holiest ties, forsaken by its truest guide; shame that writhed for revenge; and remorse that knew not prayer, — all, all blended, yet distinct, were in that awful spectacle of the guilty son.

And I had told but twenty years, and my heart had been mellowed in the tender sunshine of a happy home, and I had loved this boy as a stranger; and lo, he was Roland's son! I forgot all else, looking upon that anguish; and I threw myself on the ground by the form that writhed there, and folding my arms round the breast which in vain repelled me, I whispered, "Comfort, comfort: life is long. You shall redeem the past, you shall efface the stain, and your father shall bless you yet!"

---

## CHAPTER II.

I COULD not stay long with my unhappy cousin, but still I stayed long enough to make me think it probable that Lord Castleton's carriage would have left the inn; and when, as I passed the hall, I saw it standing before the open door, I was

seized with fear for Roland, — his emotions might have ended in some physical attack. Nor were those fears without foundation. I found Fanny kneeling beside the old soldier in the parlor where we had seen the two women, and bathing his temples, while Lord Castleton was binding his arm; and the marquis's favorite valet, who, amongst his other gifts, was something of a surgeon, was wiping the blade of the penknife that had served instead of a lancet. Lord Castleton nodded to me. "Don't be uneasy, — a little fainting fit; we have bled him. He is safe now, — see, he is recovering."

Roland's eyes, as they opened, turned to me with an anxious, inquiring look. I smiled upon him as I kissed his forehead, and could, with a safe conscience, whisper words which neither father nor Christian could refuse to receive as comfort.

In a few minutes more we had left the house. As Lord Castleton's carriage only held two, the marquis, having assisted Miss Trevanion and Roland to enter, quietly mounted the seat behind and made a sign to me to come by his side, for there was room for both. (His servant had taken one of the horses that had brought thither Roland and myself, and already gone on before.) No conversation took place between us then. Lord Castleton seemed profoundly affected, and I had no words at my command.

When we reached the inn at which Lord Castleton had changed horses, about six miles distant, the marquis insisted on Fanny's taking some rest for a few hours; for indeed she was thoroughly worn out.

I attended my uncle to his room; but he only answered my assurances of his son's repentance with a pressure of the hand, and then, gliding from me, went into the farthest recess of the room and there knelt down. When he rose, he was passive and tractable as a child. He suffered me to assist him to undress; and when he had lain down on the bed, he turned his face quietly from the light, and after a few heavy sighs, sleep seemed mercifully to steal upon him. I listened to his breathing till it grew low and regular, and then descended to the sitting-room in which I had left Lord Castleton, for he had asked me in a whisper to seek him there.

I found the marquis seated by the fire, in a thoughtful and dejected attitude.

"I am glad you are come," said he, making room for me on the hearth, "for I assure you I have not felt so mournful for many years; we have much to explain to each other. Will you begin? They say the sound of the bell dissipates the thunder-cloud; and there is nothing like the voice of a frank, honest nature to dispel all the clouds that come upon us when we think of our own faults and the villany of others. But I beg you a thousand pardons: that young man your relation, — your brave uncle's son? Is it possible?"

My explanations to Lord Castleton were necessarily brief and imperfect. The separation between Roland and his son; my ignorance of its cause; my belief in the death of the latter; my chance acquaintance with the supposed Vivian; the interest I took in him; the relief it was to the fears for his fate with which he inspired me, to think he had returned to the home I ascribed to him; and the circumstances which had induced my suspicions, justified by the result, — all this was soon hurried over.

"But I beg your pardon," said the marquis, interrupting me: "did you, in your friendship for one so unlike you, even by your own partial account, never suspect that you had stumbled upon your lost cousin?"

"Such an idea never could have crossed me."

And here I must observe that though the reader, at the first introduction of Vivian, would divine the secret, the penetration of a reader is wholly different from that of the actor in events. That I had chanced on one of those curious coincidences in the romance of real life which a reader looks out for and expects in following the course of narrative, was a supposition forbidden to me by a variety of causes. There was not the least family resemblance between Vivian and any of his relations; and, somehow or other, in Roland's son I had pictured to myself a form and a character wholly different from Vivian's. To me it would have seemed impossible that my cousin could have been so little curious to hear any of our joint family affairs; been so unheedful, or even weary, if I spoke of Roland,

—never, by a word or tone, have betrayed a sympathy with his kindred. And my other conjecture was so probable,—son of the Colonel Vivian whose name he bore. And that letter, with the post-mark of “Godalming,” and my belief, too, in my cousin’s death,—even now I am not surprised that the idea never occurred to me.

I paused from enumerating these excuses for my dulness, angry with myself, for I noticed that Lord Castleton’s fair brow darkened; and he exclaimed, “What deceit he must have gone through before he could become such a master in the art!”

“That is true, and I cannot deny it,” said I. “But his punishment now is awful; let us hope that repentance may follow the chastisement. And though certainly it must have been his own fault that drove him from his father’s home and guidance, yet, so driven, let us make some allowance for the influence of evil companionship on one so young,—for the suspicions that the knowledge of evil produces, and turns into a kind of false knowledge of the world. And in this last and worst of all his actions —”

“Ah, how justify that?”

“Justify it? Good Heavens! Justify it? No. I only say this, strange as it may seem, that I believe his affection for Miss Trevanion was for herself,—so he says, from the depth of an anguish in which the most insincere of men would cease to feign. But no more of this; she is saved, thank Heaven!”

“And you believe,” said Lord Castleton, musingly, “that he spoke the truth when he thought that I —” The marquis stopped, colored slightly, and then went on. “But no; Lady Ellinor and Trevanion, whatever might have been in their thoughts, would never have so forgot their dignity as to take him, a youth, almost a stranger,—nay, take any one into their confidence on such a subject.”

“It was but by broken gasps, incoherent, disconnected words, that Vivian — I mean my cousin — gave me any explanation of this. But Lady N——, at whose house he was staying, appears to have entertained such a notion, or at least led my cousin to think so.”

"Ah! that is possible," said Lord Castleton, with a look of relief. "Lady N—— and I were boy and girl together; we correspond; she has written to me suggesting that— Ah! I see,—an indiscreet woman. Hum! this comes of lady correspondents!"

Lord Castleton had recourse to the Beaudesert mixture; and then, as if eager to change the subject, began his own explanation. On receiving my letter, he saw even more cause to suspect a snare than I had done, for he had that morning received a letter from Trevanion, not mentioning a word about his illness; and on turning to the newspaper, and seeing a paragraph headed, "Sudden and alarming illness of Mr. Trevanion," the marquis had suspected some party manœuvre or unfeeling hoax, since the mail that had brought the letter must have travelled as quickly as any messenger who had given the information to the newspaper. He had, however, immediately sent down to the office of the journal to inquire on what authority the paragraph had been inserted, while he despatched another messenger to St. James's Square. The reply from the office was that the message had been brought by a servant in Mr. Trevanion's livery, but was not admitted as news until it had been ascertained by inquiries at the minister's house that Lady Ellinor had received the same intelligence, and actually left town in consequence.

"I was extremely sorry for poor Lady Ellinor's uneasiness," said Lord Castleton, "and extremely puzzled; but I still thought there could be no real ground for alarm until your letter reached me. And when you there stated your conviction that Mr. Gower was mixed up in this fable, and that it concealed some snare upon Fanny, I saw the thing at a glance. The road to Lord N——'s, till within the last stage or two, would be the road to Scotland. And a hardy and unscrupulous adventurer, with the assistance of Miss Trevanion's servants, might thus entrap her to Scotland itself, and there work on her fears, or if he had hope in her affections, entrap her into consent to a Scotch marriage. You may be sure, therefore, that I was on the road as soon as possible. But as your messenger came all the way from the City, and not so quickly

perhaps as he might have come; and then as there was the carriage to see to, and the horses to send for, — I found myself more than an hour and a half behind you. Fortunately, however, I made good ground, and should probably have overtaken you half-way, but that, on passing between a ditch and wagon, the carriage was upset, and that somewhat delayed me. On arriving at the town where the road branched off to Lord N——'s, I was rejoiced to learn you had taken what I was sure would prove the right direction; and finally I gained the clew to that villanous inn, by the report of the post-boys who had taken Miss Trevanion's carriage there, and met you on the road. On reaching the inn I found two fellows conferring outside the door. They sprang in as we drove up, but not before my servant Summers — a quick fellow, you know, who has travelled with me from Norway to Nubia — had quitted his seat and got into the house, into which I followed him with a step, you dog, as active as your own! Egad! I was twenty-one then! Two fellows had already knocked down poor Summers, and showed plenty of fight. Do you know," said the marquis, interrupting himself with an air of serio-comic humiliation — "do you know that I actually — no, you never will believe it; mind, 't is a secret — actually broke my cane over one fellow's shoulders? Look!" (and the marquis held up the fragment of the lamented weapon). "And I half suspect, but I can't say positively, that I had even the necessity to demean myself by a blow with the naked hand, — clenched too! Quite Eton again; upon my honor it was! Ha, ha!"

And the marquis — whose magnificent proportions, in the full vigor of man's strongest, if not his most combative, age, would have made him a formidable antagonist even to a couple of prize-fighters, supposing he had retained a little of Eton skill in such encounters — laughed with the glee of a school-boy, whether at the thought of his prowess, or his sense of the contrast between so rude a recourse to primitive warfare, and his own indolent habits and almost feminine good temper. Composing himself, however, with the quick recollection how little I could share his hilarity, he resumed gravely, "It took

us some time, I don't say to defeat our foes, but to bind them, which I thought a necessary precaution; one fellow, Trevanion's servant, all the while stunning me with quotations from Shakspeare. I then gently laid hold of a gown, the bearer of which had been long trying to scratch me, but being, luckily, a small woman, had not succeeded in reaching to my eyes. But the gown escaped, and fluttered off to the kitchen. I followed, and there I found Miss Trevanion's Jezebel of a maid. She was terribly frightened, and affected to be extremely penitent. I own to you that I don't care what a man says in the way of slander, but a woman's tongue against another woman, — especially if that tongue be in the mouth of a lady's lady, — I think it always worth silencing; I therefore consented to pardon this woman on condition she would find her way here before morning. No scandal shall come from her. Thus you see some minutes elapsed before I joined you; but I minded that the less as I heard you and the Captain were already in the room with Miss Trevanion. And not, alas! dreaming of your connection with the culprit, I was wondering what could have delayed you so long, — afraid, I own it, to find that Miss Trevanion's heart might have been seduced by that — hem, hem! — handsome — young — hem, hem — There's no fear of that?" added Lord Castleton, anxiously, as he bent his bright eyes upon mine.

I felt myself color as I answered firmly, "It is just to Miss Trevanion to add that the unhappy man owned, in her presence and in mine, that he had never had the slightest encouragement for his attempt, — never one cause to believe that she approved the affection which, I try to think, blinded and maddened himself."

"I believe you; for I think —" Lord Castleton paused uneasily, again looked at me, rose, and walked about the room with evident agitation; then, as if he had come to some resolution, he returned to the hearth and stood facing me.

"My dear young friend," said he, with his irresistible kindly frankness, "this is an occasion that excuses all things between us, even my impertinence. Your conduct from first to last has been such that I wish, from the bottom of my heart, that I had



a daughter to offer you, and that you felt for her as I believe you feel for Miss Trevanion. These are not mere words; do not look down as if ashamed. All the marquises in the world would never give me the pride I should feel if I could see in my life one steady self-sacrifice to duty and honor equal to that which I have witnessed in you."

"Oh, my lord! my lord!"

"Hear me out. That you love Fanny Trevanion I know; that she may have innocently, timidly, half-unconsciously, returned that affection, I think probable. But —"

"I know what you would say; spare me, — I know it all."

"No! it is a thing impossible; and if Lady Ellinor could consent, there would be such a life-long regret on her part, such a weight of obligation on yours, that — No, I repeat, it is impossible! But let us both think of this poor girl. I know her better than you can, — have known her from a child; know all her virtues, — they are charming; all her faults, — they expose her to danger. These parents of hers, with their genius and ambition, may do very well to rule England and influence the world; but to guide the fate of that child, — no!" Lord Castleton stopped, for he was affected. I felt my old jealousy return, but it was no longer bitter.

"I say nothing," continued the marquis, "of this position, in which, without fault of hers, Miss Trevanion is placed: Lady Ellinor's knowledge of the world, and woman's wit, will see how all that can be best put right. Still, it is awkward, and demands much consideration. But putting this aside altogether, if you do firmly believe that Miss Trevanion is lost to you, can you bear to think that she is to be flung as a mere cipher into the account of the worldly greatness of an aspiring politician, — married to some minister too busy to watch over her, or some duke who looks to pay off his mortgages with her fortune; minister or duke only regarded as a prop to Trevanion's power against a counter-cabal, or as giving his section a preponderance in the cabinet? Be assured such is her most likely destiny, or rather the beginning of a destiny yet more mournful. Now, I tell you this, that he who marries Fanny Trevanion should have little other object, for the first few

years of marriage, than to correct her failings and develop her virtues. Believe one who, alas! has too dearly bought his knowledge of woman,—hers is a character to be formed. Well, then, if this prize be lost to you, would it be an irreparable grief to your generous affection to think that it has fallen to the lot of one who at least knows his responsibilities, and who will redeem his own life, hitherto wasted, by the steadfast endeavor to fulfil them? Can you take this hand still, and press it, even though it be a rival's?"

"My lord! this from you to me is an honor that—"

"You will not take my hand? Then, believe me, it is not I that will give that grief to your heart."

Touched, penetrated, melted, by this generosity in a man of such lofty claims, to one of my age and fortunes, I pressed that noble hand, half raising it to my lips,—an action of respect that would have misbecome neither; but he gently withdrew the hand, in the instinct of his natural modesty. I had then no heart to speak further on such a subject, but faltering out that I would go and see my uncle, I took up the light and ascended the stairs. I crept noiselessly into Roland's room, and shading the light, saw that, though he slept, his face was very troubled. And then I thought, "What are my young griefs to his?" and sitting beside the bed, communed with my own heart and was still.

---

### CHAPTER III.

At sunrise I went down into the sitting-room, having resolved to write to my father to join us; for I felt how much Roland needed his comfort and his counsel, and it was no great distance from the old Tower. I was surprised to find Lord Castleton still seated by the fire; he had evidently not gone to bed.

"That's right," said he; "we must encourage each other to recruit nature;" and he pointed to the breakfast-things on the table.

I had scarcely tasted food for many hours, but I was only aware of my own hunger by a sensation of faintness. I ate unconsciously, and was almost ashamed to feel how much the food restored me.

"I suppose," said I, "that you will soon set off to Lord N——'s?"

"Nay, did I not tell you that I have sent Summers express, with a note to Lady Ellinor begging her to come here? I did not see, on reflection, how I could decorously accompany Miss Trevanion alone, without even a female servant, to a house full of gossiping guests. And even had your uncle been well enough to go with us, his presence would but have created an additional cause for wonder; so as soon as we arrived, and while you went up with the Captain, I wrote my letter and despatched my man. I expect Lady Ellinor will be here before nine o'clock. Meanwhile I have already seen that infamous waiting-woman, and taken care to prevent any danger from her garrulity. And you will be pleased to hear that I have hit upon a mode of satisfying the curiosity of our friend Mrs. Grundy—that is, 'the World'—without injury to any one. We must suppose that that footman of Trevanion's was out of his mind,—it is but a charitable, and your good father would say a philosophical, supposition. All great knavery is madness! The world could not get on if truth and goodness were not the natural tendencies of sane minds. Do you understand?"

"Not quite."

"Why, the footman, being out of his mind, invented this mad story of Trevanion's illness, frightened Lady Ellinor and Miss Trevanion out of their wits with his own chimera, and hurried them both off, one after the other. I, having heard from Trevanion, and knowing he could not have been ill when the servant left him, set off, as was natural in so old a friend of the family, saved her from the freaks of a maniac,—who, getting more and more flighty, was beginning to play the

Jack o' Lantern, and leading her, Heaven knows where, over the country, — and then wrote to Lady Ellinor to come to her. It is but a hearty laugh at our expense, and Mrs. Grundy is content. If you don't want her to pity or backbite, let her laugh. She is a she-Cerberus, — she wants to eat you; well: stop her mouth with a cake.

"Yes," continued this better sort of Aristippus, so wise under all his seeming levities, "the cue thus given, everything favors it. If that rogue of a lackey quoted Shakspeare as much in the servants' hall as he did while I was binding him neck and heels in the kitchen, that's enough for all the household to declare he was moon-stricken; and if we find it necessary to do anything more, why, we must induce him to go into Bedlam for a month or two. The disappearance of the waiting-woman is natural; either I or Lady Ellinor send her about her business for her folly in being so gulled by the lunatic. If that's unjust, why, injustice to servants is common enough, public and private; neither minister nor lackey can be forgiven if he help us into a scrape. One must vent one's passion on something. Witness my poor cane, — though, indeed, a better illustration would be the cane that Louis XIV. broke on a footman because his Majesty was out of humor with the prince, whose shoulders were too sacred for royal indignation.

"So you see," concluded Lord Castleton, lowering his voice, "that your uncle, amongst all his other causes of sorrow, may think at least that his name is spared in his son's. And the young man himself may find reform easier when freed from that despair of the possibility of redemption which Mrs. Grundy inflicts upon those who — Courage, then; life is long!"

"My very words!" I cried; "and so repeated by you, Lord Castleton, they seem prophetic."

"Take my advice, and don't lose sight of your cousin while his pride is yet humbled, and his heart perhaps softened. I don't say this only for his sake. No, it is your poor uncle I think of, — noble old fellow! And now I think it right to pay Lady Ellinor the respect of repairing, as well as I can, the havoc three sleepless nights have made on the exterior

of a gentleman who is on the shady side of remorseless forty."

Lord Castleton here left me, and I wrote to my father, begging him to meet us at the next stage (which was the nearest point from the high road to the Tower), and I sent off the letter by a messenger on horseback. That task done, I leaned my head upon my hand, and a profound sadness settled upon me, despite all my efforts to face the future and think only of the duties of life — not its sorrows.



#### CHAPTER IV.

BEFORE nine o'clock Lady Ellinor arrived, and went straight into Miss Trevanion's room; I took refuge in my uncle's. Roland was awake and calm, but so feeble that he made no effort to rise; and it was his calm, indeed, that alarmed me the most, — it was like the calm of nature thoroughly exhausted. He obeyed me mechanically, as a patient takes from your hand the draught, of which he is almost unconscious, when I pressed him to take food. He smiled on me faintly when I spoke to him, but made me a sign that seemed to implore silence. Then he turned his face from me and buried it in the pillow; and I thought that he slept again, when, raising himself a little, and feeling for my hand, he said, in a scarcely audible voice, —

"Where is he?"

"Would you see him, sir?"

"No, no; that would kill me, — and then what would become of him?"

"He has promised me an interview, and in that interview I feel assured he will obey your wishes, whatever they are."

Roland made no answer.

"Lord Castleton has arranged all, so that his name and madness (thus let us call it) will never be known."

"Pride, pride, pride still!" murmured the old soldier. "The name, the name, — well, that is much; but the living soul! — I wish Austin were here."

"I have sent for him, sir."

Roland pressed my hand, and was again silent. Then he began to mutter, as I thought, incoherently about the Peninsula and obeying orders; and how some officer woke Lord Wellington at night and said that something or other (I could not catch what, — the phrase was technical and military) was impossible; and how Lord Wellington asked, "Where's the order-book?" and looking into the order-book, said, "Not at all impossible, for it is in the order-book;" and so Lord Wellington turned round and went to sleep again. Then suddenly Roland half rose, and said, in a voice clear and firm, "But Lord Wellington, though a great captain, was a fallible man, sir, and the order-book was his own mortal handiwork. Get me the Bible!"

Oh, Roland, Roland! and I had feared that thy mind was wandering!

So I went down and borrowed a Bible in large characters, and placed it on the bed before him, opening the shutters and letting in God's day upon God's word.

I had just done this when there was a slight knock at the door. I opened it, and Lord Castleton stood without. He asked me, in a whisper, if he might see my uncle. I drew him in gently, and pointed to the soldier of life "learning what was not impossible" from the unerring Order-Book.

Lord Castleton gazed with a changing countenance, and without disturbing my uncle, stole back. I followed him, and gently closed the door.

"You must save his son," he said in a faltering voice, — "you must; and tell me how to help you. That sight, — no sermon ever touched me more! Now come down and receive Lady Ellinor's thanks. We are going. She wants me to tell my own tale to my old friend Mrs. Grundy; so I go with them. Come!"

On entering the sitting-room, Lady Ellinor came up and fairly embraced me. I need not repeat her thanks, still less

the praises, which fell cold and hollow on my ear. My gaze rested on Fanny where she stood apart, — her eyes, heavy with fresh tears, bent on the ground. And the sense of all her charms; the memory of the tender, exquisite kindness she had shown to the stricken father; the generous pardon she had extended to the criminal son; the looks she had bent upon me on that memorable night (looks that had spoken such trust in my presence), the moment in which she had clung to me for protection, and her breath been warm upon my cheek, — all these rushed over me, and I felt that the struggle of months was undone, that I had never loved her as I loved her then, when I saw her but to lose her evermore! And then there came for the first, and, I now rejoice to think, for the only time, a bitter, ungrateful accusation against the cruelty of fortune and the disparities of life. What was it that set our two hearts eternally apart and made hope impossible? Not nature, but the fortune that gives a second nature to the world. Ah, could I then think that it is in that second nature that the soul is ordained to seek its trials, and that the elements of human virtue find their harmonious place? What I answered I know not. Neither know I how long I stood there listening to sounds which seemed to have no meaning, till there came other sounds which indeed woke my sense and made my blood run cold to hear, — the tramp of the horses, the grating of the wheels, the voice at the door that said all was ready.

Then Fanny lifted her eyes, and they met mine; and then involuntarily and hastily she moved a few steps towards me, and I clasped my right hand to my heart, as if to still its beating, and remained still. Lord Castleton had watched us both. I felt that watch upon us, though I had till then shunned his looks; now, as I turned my eyes from Fanny's, that look came full upon me, — soft, compassionate, benignant. Suddenly, and with an unutterable expression of nobleness, the marquis turned to Lady Ellinor and said: "Pardon me for telling you an old story. A friend of mine — a man of my own years — had the temerity to hope that he might one day or other win the affections of a lady young enough to be his daughter, and

whom circumstances and his own heart led him to prefer from all her sex. My friend had many rivals; and you will not wonder, for you have seen the lady. Among them was a young gentleman who for months had been an inmate of the same house (hush, Lady Ellinor! you will hear me out; the interest of my story is to come), who respected the sanctity of the house he had entered, and had left it when he felt he loved, for he was poor, and the lady rich. Some time after, this gentleman saved the lady from a great danger, and was then on the eve of leaving England (hush! again, hush!). My friend was present when these two young persons met, before the probable absence of many years, and so was the mother of the lady to whose hand he still hoped one day to aspire. He saw that his young rival wished to say, 'Farewell!' and without a witness; that farewell was all that his honor and his reason could suffer him to say. My friend saw that the lady felt the natural gratitude for a great service, and the natural pity for a generous and unfortunate affection; for so, Lady Ellinor, he only interpreted the sob that reached his ear! What think you my friend did? Your high mind at once conjectures. He said to himself: 'If I am ever to be blest with the heart which, in spite of disparity of years, I yet hope to win, let me show how entire is the trust that I place in its integrity and innocence; let the romance of first youth be closed, the farewell of pure hearts be spoken, unembittered by the idle jealousies of one mean suspicion.' With that thought, which *you*, Lady Ellinor, will never stoop to blame, he placed his hand on that of the noble mother, drew her gently towards the door, and calmly confident of the result, left these two young natures to the unwitnessed impulse of maiden honor and manly duty."

All this was said and done with a grace and earnestness that thrilled the listeners; word and action suited to each with so inimitable a harmony that the spell was not broken till the voice ceased and the door closed.

That mournful bliss for which I had so pined was vouchsafed: I was alone with her to whom, indeed, honor and reason forbade me to say more than the last farewell.



It was some time before we recovered, before we *felt* that we were alone.

O ye moments that I can now recall with so little sadness in the mellow and sweet remembrance, rest ever holy and undisclosed in the solemn recesses of the heart! Yes, whatever confession of weakness was interchanged, we were not unworthy of the trust that permitted the mournful consolation of the parting. No trite love-tale, with vows not to be fulfilled, and hopes that the future must belie, mocked the realities of the life that lay before us. Yet on the confines of the dream we saw the day rising cold upon the world; and if — children as we wellnigh were — we shrank somewhat from the light, we did not blaspheme the sun and cry, "There is darkness in the dawn!"

All that we attempted was to comfort and strengthen each other for that which must be; not seeking to conceal the grief we felt, but promising, with simple faith, to struggle against the grief. If vow were pledged between us, — *that* was the vow: each for the other's sake would strive to enjoy the blessings Heaven left us still. Well may I say that we were children! I know not, in the broken words that passed between us, in the sorrowful hearts which those words revealed, I know not if there were that which they who own in human passion but the storm and the whirlwind would call the love of maturer years, — the love that gives fire to the song, and tragedy to the stage; but I know that there was neither a word nor a thought which made the sorrow of the children a rebellion to the Heavenly Father.

And again the door unclosed, and Fanny walked with a firm step to her mother's side, and pausing there, extended her hand to me and said, as I bent over it, "Heaven *will* be with you!"

A word from Lady Ellinor, a frank smile from him, the rival, one last, last glance from the soft eyes of Fanny, and then Solitude rushed upon me, — rushed as something visible, palpable, overpowering. I felt it in the glare of the sunbeam, I heard it in the breath of the air; like a ghost it rose there, — where *she* had filled the space with her presence but a

moment before ! A something seemed gone from the universe forever ; a change like that of death passed through my being ; and when I woke, to feel that my being lived again, I knew that it was my youth and its poet-land that were no more, and that I had passed, with an unconscious step, which never could retrace its way, into the hard world of laborious man !

## PART XVI.

## CHAPTER I.

"PLEASE, sir, be this note for you?" asked the waiter.

"For me, — yes; it is my name."

I did not recognize the handwriting, and yet the note was from one whose writing I had often seen. But formerly the writing was cramped, stiff, perpendicular (a feigned hand, though I guessed not it was feigned); now it was hasty, irregular, impatient, scarce a letter formed, scarce a word that seemed finished, and yet strangely legible withal, as the handwriting of a bold man almost always is. I opened the note listlessly, and read, —

"I have watched for you all the morning. I saw her go. Well! I did not throw myself under the hoofs of the horsea. I write this in a public-house, not far. Will you follow the bearer, and see once again the outcast whom all the rest of the world will shun?"

Though I did not recognize the hand, there could be no doubt who was the writer.

"The boy wants to know if there's an answer," said the waiter.

I nodded, took up my hat, and left the room. A ragged boy was standing in the yard, and scarcely six words passed between us before I was following him through a narrow lane that faced the inn and terminated in a turnstile. Here the boy paused, and making me a sign to go on, went back his way whistling. I passed the turnstile, and found myself in a green field, with a row of stunted willows hanging over a narrow rill. I looked round, and saw Vivian (as I intend still

to call him) half kneeling, and seemingly intent upon some object in the grass.

My eye followed his mechanically. A young unfledged bird that had left the nest too soon stood, all still and alone, on the bare short sward, its beak open as for food, its gaze fixed on us with a wistful stare. Methought there was something in the forlorn bird that softened me more to the forlorn youth, of whom it seemed a type.

"Now," said Vivian, speaking half to himself, half to me, "did the bird fall from the nest, or leave the nest at its own wild whim? The parent does not protect it. Mind, I say not it is the parent's fault, — perhaps the fault is all with the wanderer. But, look you, though the parent is not here, the foe is, — yonder, see!"

And the young man pointed to a large brindled cat that, kept back from its prey by our unwelcome neighborhood, still remained watchful, a few paces off, stirring its tail gently backwards and forwards, and with that stealthy look in its round eyes, dulled by the sun, — half fierce, half frightened, — which belongs to its tribe when man comes between the devourer and the victim.

"I do see," said I; "but a passing footstep has saved the bird!"

"Stop!" said Vivian, laying my hand on his own, and with his old bitter smile on his lip, — "stop! Do you think it mercy to save the bird? What from; and what for? From a natural enemy, — from a short pang and a quick death? Fie! is not that better than slow starvation, — or, if you take more heed of it, than the prison-bars of a cage? You cannot restore the nest, you cannot recall the parent. Be wiser in your mercy, — leave the bird to its gentlest fate."

I looked hard on Vivian: the lip had lost the bitter smile. He rose and turned away. I sought to take up the poor bird; but it did not know its friends, and ran from me, chirping piteously, — ran towards the very jaws of the grim enemy. I was only just in time to scare away the beast, which sprang up a tree and glared down through the hanging boughs. Then I followed the bird, and as I followed, I heard, not knowing at

first whence the sound came, a short, quick, tremulous note. Was it near, was it far? From the earth, in the sky? Poor parent bird, like parent-love, it seemed now far and now near; now on earth, now in sky!

And at last, quick and sudden, as if born of the space, lo, the little wings hovered over me!

The young bird halted, and I also.

"Come," said I, "ye have found each other at last, — settle it between you!"

I went back to the outcast.

---

## CHAPTER II.

PISISTRATUS. — "How came you to know we had stayed in the town?"

VIVIAN. — "Do you think I could remain where you left me? I wandered out, wandered hither. Passing at dawn through yon streets, I saw the hostlers loitering by the gates of the yard, overheard them talk, and so knew you were all at the inn, — all!" He sighed heavily.

PISISTRATUS. — "Your poor father is very ill. Oh, cousin, how could you fling from you so much love?"

VIVIAN. — "Love! his! my father's!"

PISISTRATUS. — "Do you really not believe, then, that your father loved you?"

VIVIAN. — "If I had believed it, I had never left him. All the gold of the Indies had never bribed me to leave my mother."

PISISTRATUS. — "This is indeed a strange misconception of yours. If we can remove it, all may be well yet. Need there now be any secrets between us? [persuasively]. Sit down, and tell me all, cousin."

After some hesitation, Vivian complied; and by the clearing of his brow and the very tone of his voice I felt sure that he

was no longer seeking to disguise the truth. But as I afterwards learned the father's tale as well as now the son's, so, instead of repeating Vivian's words, which — not by design, but by the twist of a mind habitually wrong — distorted the facts, I will state what appears to me the real case, as between the parties so unhappily opposed. Reader, pardon me if the recital be tedious; and if thou thinkest that I bear not hard enough on the erring hero of the story, remember that he who recites, judges as Austin's son must judge of Roland's.

---

### CHAPTER III.

#### VIVIAN.

#### AT THE ENTRANCE OF LIFE SITS — THE MOTHER.

It was during the war in Spain that a severe wound, and the fever which ensued, detained Roland at the house of a Spanish widow. His hostess had once been rich; but her fortune had been ruined in the general calamities of the country. She had an only daughter, who assisted to nurse and tend the wounded Englishman; and when the time approached for Roland's departure, the frank grief of the young Ramouna betrayed the impression that the guest had made upon her affections. Much of gratitude, and something, it might be, of an exquisite sense of honor, aided, in Roland's breast, the charm naturally produced by the beauty of his young nurse, and the knightly compassion he felt for her ruined fortunes and desolate condition.

In one of those hasty impulses common to a generous nature — and which too often fatally vindicate the rank of Prudence amidst the tutelary Powers of Life — Roland committed the error of marriage with a girl of whose connections he knew

nothing, and of whose nature little more than its warm, spontaneous susceptibility. In a few days subsequent to these rash nuptials, Roland rejoined the march of the army; nor was he able to return to Spain till after the crowning victory of Waterloo.

Maimed by the loss of a limb, and with the scars of many a noble wound still fresh, Roland then hastened to a home, the dreams of which had soothed the bed of pain, and now replaced the earlier visions of renown. During his absence a son had been born to him, — a son whom he might rear to take the place he had left in his country's service; to renew, in some future fields, a career that had failed the romance of his own antique and chivalrous ambition. As soon as that news had reached him his care had been to provide an English nurse for the infant, so that with the first sounds of the mother's endearments, the child might yet hear a voice from the father's land. A female relation of Bolt had settled in Spain, and was induced to undertake this duty. Natural as this appointment was to a man so devotedly English, it displeased his wild and passionate Ramouna. She had that mother's jealousy, strongest in minds uneducated; she had also that peculiar pride which belongs to her country-people of every rank and condition: the jealousy and the pride were both wounded by the sight of the English nurse at the child's cradle.

That Roland on regaining his Spanish hearth should be disappointed in his expectations of the happiness awaiting him there, was the inevitable condition of such a marriage, since, not the less for his military bluntness, Roland had that refinement of feeling, perhaps over-fastidious, which belongs to all natures essentially poetic; and as the first illusions of love died away, there could have been little indeed congenial to his stately temper in one divided from him by an utter absence of education and by the strong, but nameless, distinctions of national views and manners. The disappointment probably, however, went deeper than that which usually attends an ill-assorted union; for instead of bringing his wife to his old Tower (an expatriation which she would doubtless have resisted to the utmost), he accepted, maimed as he was, not very

long after his return to Spain, the offer of a military post under Ferdinand. The Cavalier doctrines and intense loyalty of Roland attached him, without reflection, to the service of a throne which the English arms had contributed to establish; while the extreme unpopularity of the Constitutional Party in Spain, and the stigma of irreligion fixed to it by the priests, aided to foster Roland's belief that he was supporting a beloved king against the professors of those revolutionary and Jacobinical doctrines which to him were the very atheism of politics. The experience of a few years in the service of a bigot so contemptible as Ferdinand, whose highest object of patriotism was the restoration of the Inquisition, added another disappointment to those which had already embittered the life of a man who had seen in the grand hero of Cervantes no follies to satirize, but high virtues to imitate. Poor Quixote himself,—he came mournfully back to his La Mancha with no other reward for his knight-errantry than a decoration which he disdained to place beside his simple Waterloo medal, and a grade for which he would have blushed to resign his more modest, but more honorable, English dignity.

But still weaving hopes, the sanguine man returned to his Penates. His child now had grown from infancy into boyhood,—the child would pass naturally into his care. Delightful occupation! At the thought, home smiled again.

Now behold the most pernicious circumstance in this ill-omened connection.

The father of Ramouna had been one of that strange and mysterious race which presents in Spain so many features distinct from the characteristics of its kindred tribes in more civilized lands. The Gitano, or gypsy of Spain, is not the mere vagrant we see on our commons and road-sides. Retaining, indeed, much of his lawless principles and predatory inclinations, he lives often in towns, exercises various callings, and not unfrequently becomes rich. A wealthy Gitano had married a Spanish woman;<sup>1</sup> Roland's wife had been the offspring

<sup>1</sup> A Spaniard very rarely indeed marries a Gitana, or female gypsy. But occasionally (observes Mr. Borrow) a wealthy Gitano marries a Spanish female.



of this marriage. The Gitano had died while Ramouna was yet extremely young, and her childhood had been free from the influences of her paternal kindred. But though her mother, retaining her own religion, had brought up Ramouna in the same faith, pure from the godless creed of the Gitano, and at her husband's death had separated herself wholly from his tribe, still she had lost caste with her own kin and people. And while struggling to regain it, the fortune, which made her sole chance of success in that attempt, was swept away, so that she had remained apart and solitary, and could bring no friends to cheer the solitude of Ramouna during Roland's absence. But while my uncle was still in the service of Ferdinand, the widow died; and then the only relatives who came round Ramouna were her father's kindred. They had not ventured to claim affinity while her mother lived, and they did so now by attentions and caresses to her son. This opened to them at once Ramouna's heart and doors. Meanwhile the English nurse—who, in spite of all that could render her abode odious to her, had, from strong love to her charge, stoutly maintained her post—died, a few weeks after Ramouna's mother; and no healthful influence remained to counteract those baneful ones to which the heir of the honest old Caxtons was subject. But Roland returned home in a humor to be pleased with all things. Joyously he clasped his wife to his breast, and thought, with self-reproach, that he had forborne too little and exacted too much,—he would be wiser now. Delightedly he acknowledged the beauty, the intelligence, and manly bearing of the boy, who played with his sword-knot and ran off with his pistols as a prize.

The news of the Englishman's arrival at first kept the lawless kinsfolk from the house; but they were fond of the boy, and the boy of them, and interviews between him and these wild comrades, if stolen, were not less frequent. Gradually Roland's eyes became opened. As in habitual intercourse the boy abandoned the reserve which awe and cunning at first imposed, Roland was inexpressibly shocked at the bold principles his son affected, and at his utter incapacity even to comprehend that plain honesty and that frank honor which to the

English soldier, seemed ideas innate and heaven-planted. Soon afterwards, Roland found that a system of plunder was carried on in his household, and tracked it to the connivance of the wife and the agency of his son for the benefit of lazy bravos and dissolute vagrants. A more patient man than Roland might well have been exasperated, a more wary man confounded, by this discovery. He took the natural step,—perhaps insisting on it too summarily; perhaps not allowing enough for the uncultured mind and lively passions of his wife,—he ordered her instantly to prepare to accompany him from the place, and to abandon all communication with her kindred.

A vehement refusal ensued; but Roland was not a man to give up such a point, and at length a false submission and a feigned repentance soothed his resentment and obtained his pardon. They moved several miles from the place; but where they moved, there some at least, and those the worst, of the baleful brood stealthily followed. Whatever Ramouna's earlier love for Roland had been, it had evidently long ceased, in the thorough want of sympathy between them, and in that absence which, if it renews a strong affection, destroys an affection already weakened. But the mother and son adored each other with all the strength of their strong, wild natures. Even under ordinary circumstances the father's influence over a boy yet in childhood is exerted in vain if the mother lend herself to baffle it. And in this miserable position, what chance had the blunt, stern, honest Roland (separated from his son during the most ductile years of infancy) against the ascendancy of a mother who humored all the faults and gratified all the wishes of her darling?

In his despair, Roland let fall the threat that if thus thwarted, it would become his duty to withdraw his son from the mother. This threat instantly hardened both hearts against him. The wife represented Roland to the boy as a tyrant, as an enemy, as one who had destroyed all the happiness they had before enjoyed in each other, as one whose severity showed that he hated his own child; and the boy believed her. In his own house a firm union was formed against

Roland, and protected by the cunning which is the force of the weak against the strong.

In spite of all, Roland could never forget the tenderness with which the young nurse had watched over the wounded man, nor the love — genuine for the hour, though not drawn from the feelings which withstand the wear and tear of life — that lips so beautiful had pledged him in the bygone days. These thoughts must have come perpetually between his feelings and his judgment, to embitter still more his position, to harass still more his heart. And if, by the strength of that sense of duty which made the force of his character, he could have strung himself to the fulfilment of the threat, humanity, at all events, compelled him to delay it, — his wife promised to be again a mother. Blanche was born. How could he take the infant from the mother's breast, or abandon the daughter to the fatal influences from which only, by so violent an effort, he could free the son ?

No wonder, poor Roland, that those deep furrows contracted thy bold front, and thy hair grew gray before its time !

Fortunately, perhaps, for all parties, Roland's wife died while Blanche was still an infant. She was taken ill of a fever ; she died delirious, clasping her boy to her breast, and praying the saints to protect him from his cruel father. How often that death-bed haunted the son, and justified his belief that there was no parent's love in the heart which was now his sole shelter from the world and the " pelting of its pitiless rain ! " Again I say " poor Roland ; " for I know that in that harsh, unloving disrapture of such solemn ties thy large, generous heart forgot its wrongs, — again didst thou see tender eyes bending over the wounded stranger, again hear low murmurs breathe the warm weakness which the women of the South deem it no shame to own. And now did it all end in those ravings of hate, and in that glazing gaze of terror ?

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE PRECEPTOR.

ROLAND removed to France, and fixed his abode in the environs of Paris. He placed Blanche at a convent in the immediate neighborhood, going to see her daily, and gave himself up to the education of his son. The boy was apt to learn; but to unlearn was here the arduous task, — and for that task it would have needed either the passionless experience, the exquisite forbearance, of a practised teacher, or the love and confidence and yielding heart of a believing pupil. Roland felt that he was not the man to be the teacher, and that his son's heart remained obstinately closed to him. He looked round, and found at the other side of Paris what seemed a suitable preceptor, — a young Frenchman of some distinction in letters, more especially in science, with all a Frenchman's eloquence of talk, full of high-sounding sentiments that pleased the romantic enthusiasm of the Captain; so Roland, with sanguine hopes, confided his son to this man's care. The boy's natural quickness mastered readily all that pleased his taste; he learned to speak and write French with rare felicity and precision. His tenacious memory, and those flexile organs in which the talent for languages is placed, served, with the help of an English master, to revive his earlier knowledge of his father's tongue and to enable him to speak it with fluent correctness, — though there was always in his accent something which had struck me as strange; but not suspecting it to be foreign, I had thought it a theatrical affectation. He did not go far into science, — little further, perhaps, than a smattering of French mathematics; but he acquired a remarkable facility and promptitude in calculation. He devoured eagerly the light reading thrown in his way, and

picked up thence that kind of knowledge which novels and plays afford, for good or evil, according as the novel or the play elevates the understanding and ennobles the passions, or merely corrupts the fancy and lowers the standard of human nature. But of all that Roland desired him to be taught, the son remained as ignorant as before. Among the other misfortunes of this ominous marriage, Roland's wife had possessed all the superstitions of a Roman Catholic Spaniard; and with these the boy had unconsciously intermingled doctrines far more dreary, imbibed from the dark paganism of the Gitanos.

Roland had sought a Protestant for his son's tutor. The preceptor was nominally a Protestant, — a biting derider of all superstitions, indeed! He was such a Protestant as some defender of Voltaire's religion says the Great Wit would have been had he lived in a Protestant country. The Frenchman laughed the boy out of his superstitions, to leave behind them the sneering scepticism of the *Encyclopédie*, without those redeeming ethics on which all sects of philosophy are agreed, but which, unhappily, it requires a philosopher to comprehend.

This preceptor was doubtless not aware of the mischief he was doing; and for the rest, he taught his pupil after his own system, — a mild and plausible one, very much like the system we at home are recommended to adopt: "Teach the understanding, — all else will follow;" "Learn to read *something*, and it will all come right;" "Follow the bias of the pupil's mind, — thus you develop genius, not thwart it." Mind, understanding, genius, — fine things! But to educate the whole man you must educate something more than these. Not for want of mind, understanding, genius, have Borgias and Neros left their names as monuments of horror to mankind. Where, in all this teaching, was one lesson to warm the heart and guide the soul?

Oh, mother mine, that the boy had stood by thy knee and heard from thy lips why life was given us, in what life shall end, and how heaven stands open to us night and day! Oh, father mine, that thou hadst been his preceptor, not in book-learning, but the heart's simple wisdom! Oh that he had

learned from thee, in parables closed with practice, the happiness of self-sacrifice, and how "good deeds should repair the bad" !

It was the misfortune of this boy, with his daring and his beauty, that there was in his exterior and his manner that which attracted indulgent interest and a sort of compassionate admiration. The Frenchman liked him, believed his story, thought him ill-treated by that hard-visaged English soldier. All English people were so disagreeable, particularly English soldiers ; and the Captain once mortally offended the Frenchman by calling Vilainton *un grand homme*, and denying, with brutal indignation, that the English had poisoned Napoleon ! So, instead of teaching the son to love and revere his father, the Frenchman shrugged his shoulders when the boy broke into some unfilial complaint, and at most said, "Mais, cher enfant, ton père est Anglais, — c'est tout dire." Meanwhile, as the child sprang rapidly into precocious youth, he was permitted a liberty in his hours of leisure of which he availed himself with all the zest of his earlier habits and adventurous temper. He formed acquaintances among the loose young haunters of *cafés* and spendthrifts of that capital, — the wits ! He became an excellent swordsman and pistol-shot, adroit in all games in which skill helps fortune. He learned betimes to furnish himself with money, by the cards and the billiard-balls.

But delighted with the easy home he had obtained, he took care to school his features and smooth his manner in his father's visits, to make the most of what he had learned of less ignoble knowledge, and, with his characteristic imitateness, to cite the finest sentiments he had found in his plays and novels. What father is not credulous ? Roland believed, and wept tears of joy. And now he thought the time was come to take back the boy, — to return with a worthy heir to the old Tower. He thanked and blessed the tutor ; he took the son. But under pretence that he had yet some things to master, whether in book knowledge or manly accomplishments, the youth begged his father at all events not yet to return to England, — to let him attend his tutor daily for some months.

Roland consented, moved from his old quarters, and took a lodging for both in the same suburb as that in which the teacher resided. But soon, when they were under one roof, the boy's habitual tastes, and his repugnance to all paternal authority, were betrayed. To do my unhappy cousin justice (such as that justice is), though he had the cunning for a short disguise, he had not the hypocrisy to maintain systematic deceit. He could play a part for a while, from an exulting joy in his own address; but he could not wear a mask with the patience of cold-blooded dissimulation. Why enter into painful details, so easily divined by the intelligent reader? The faults of the son were precisely those to which Roland would be least indulgent. To the ordinary scrapes of high-spirited boyhood no father, I am sure, would have been more lenient; but to anything that seemed low, petty, — that grated on him as a gentleman and soldier, — there, not for worlds would I have braved the darkness of his frown, and the woe that spoke like scorn in his voice. And when, after all warning and prohibition were in vain, Roland found his son in the middle of the night in a resort of gamblers and sharpers, carrying all before him with his cue, in the full flush of triumph, and a great heap of five-franc pieces before him, you may conceive with what wrath the proud, hasty, passionate man drove out, cane in hand, the obscene associates, flinging after them the son's ill-gotten gains; and with what resentful humiliation the son was compelled to follow the father home. Then Roland took the boy to England, but not to the old Tower; that hearth of his ancestors was still too sacred for the footsteps of the vagrant heir!

## CHAPTER V.

THE HEARTH WITHOUT TRUST, AND THE WORLD WITHOUT  
A GUIDE.

AND then, vainly grasping at every argument his blunt sense could suggest, then talked Roland much and grandly of the duties men owed, — even if they threw off all love to their father, still to their father's name; and then his pride, always so lively, grew irritable and harsh, and seemed, no doubt, to the perverted ears of the son, unlovely and unloving. And that pride, without serving one purpose of good, did yet more mischief; for the youth caught the disease, but in a wrong way. And he said to himself, —

“Ho, then, my father is a great man, with all these ancestors and big words! And he has lands and a castle; and yet how miserably we live, and how he stints me! But if he has cause for pride in all these dead men, why, so have I. And are these lodgings, these appurtenances, fit for the ‘gentleman’ he says I am?”

Even in England the gypsy blood broke out as before, and the youth found vagrant associates, — Heaven knows how or where; strange-looking forms, gaudily shabby and disreputably smart, were seen lurking in the corner of the street, or peering in at the window, slinking off if they saw Roland: and Roland could not stoop to be a spy. And the son's heart grew harder and harder against his father, and his father's face now never smiled on him. Then bills came in, and duns knocked at the door, — bills and duns to a man who shrank from the thought of a debt as an ermine from a spot on its fur! And the son's short answer to remonstrance was: “Am I not a gentleman? These are the things gentlemen require.” Then perhaps Roland remembered the experiment of his French friend, and left his bureau unlocked, and said, “Ruin me if you will, but



no debts. There is money in those drawers,—they are unlocked.” That trust would forever have cured of extravagance a youth with a high and delicate sense of honor: the pupil of the Gitanos did not understand the trust; he thought it conveyed a natural, though ungracious, permission to take out what he wanted,—and he took! To Roland this seemed a theft, and a theft of the coarsest kind; but when he so said, the son started indignant, and saw in that which had been so touching an appeal to his honor but a trap to decoy him into disgrace. In short, neither could understand the other. Roland forbade his son to stir from the house; and the young man the same night let himself out, and stole forth into the wide world, to enjoy or defy it in his own wild way.

It would be tedious to follow him through his various adventures and experiments on fortune (even if I knew them all, which I do not). And now putting altogether aside his right name, which he had voluntarily abandoned, and not embarrassing the reader with the earlier aliases assumed, I shall give to my unfortunate kinsman the name by which I first knew him, and continue to do so until,—Heaven grant the time may come!—having first redeemed, he may reclaim his own. It was in joining a set of strolling players that Vivian became acquainted with Peacock; and that worthy, who had many strings to his bow, soon grew aware of Vivian’s extraordinary skill with the cue, and saw therein a better mode of making their joint fortunes than the boards of an itinerant Thespis furnished to either. Vivian listened to him, and it was while their intimacy was most fresh that I met them on the high-road. That chance meeting produced (if I may be allowed to believe his assurance) a strong, and for the moment a salutary, effect upon Vivian. The comparative innocence and freshness of a boy’s mind were new to him; the elastic, healthful spirits with which those gifts were accompanied startled him, by the contrast to his own forced gayety and secret gloom. And this boy was his own cousin!

Coming afterwards to London, he adventured inquiry at the hotel in the Strand at which I had given my address; learned where we were; and passing one night in the street, saw

my uncle at the window,—to recognize and to fly from him. Having then some money at his disposal, he broke off abruptly from the set in which he had been thrown. He had resolved to return to France,—he would try for a more respectable mode of existence. He had not found happiness in that liberty he had won, nor room for the ambition that began to gnaw him, in those pursuits from which his father had vainly warned him. His most reputable friend was his old tutor; he would go to him. He went; but the tutor was now married, and was himself a father,—and that made a wonderful alteration in his practical ethics. It was no longer moral to aid the son in rebellion to his father. Vivian evinced his usual sarcastic haughtiness at the reception he met, and was requested civilly to leave the house. Then again he flung himself on his wits at Paris. But there were plenty of wits there sharper than his own. He got into some quarrel with the police,—not, indeed, for any dishonest practices of his own, but from an unwary acquaintance with others less scrupulous,—and deemed it prudent to quit France. Thus had I met him again, forlorn and ragged, in the streets of London.

Meanwhile Roland, after the first vain search, had yielded to the indignation and disgust that had long rankled within him. His son had thrown off his authority because it preserved him from dishonor. His ideas of discipline were stern, and patience had been well-nigh crushed out of his heart. He thought he could bear to resign his son to his fate,—to disown him, and to say, “I have no more a son.” It was in this mood that he had first visited our house. But when, on that memorable night in which he had narrated to his thrilling listeners the dark tale of a fellow-sufferer’s woe and crime,—betraying in the tale, to my father’s quick sympathy, his own sorrow and passion,—it did not need much of his gentler brother’s subtle art to learn or guess the whole, nor much of Austin’s mild persuasion to convince Roland that he had not yet exhausted all efforts to track the wanderer and reclaim the erring child. Then he had gone to London; then he had sought every spot which the outcast would probably haunt; then had he saved and pinched from his own necessities to

have wherewithal to enter theatres and gaming-houses, and fee the agencies of police; then had he seen the form for which he had watched and pined, in the street below his window, and cried, in a joyous delusion, "He repents!" One day a letter reached my uncle, through his bankers, from the French tutor (who knew of no other means of tracing Roland but through the house by which his salary had been paid), informing him of his son's visit. Roland started instantly for Paris. Arriving there, he could only learn of his son through the police, and from them only learn that he had been seen in the company of accomplished swindlers, who were already in the hands of justice, but that the youth himself, whom there was nothing to criminate, had been suffered to quit Paris, and had taken, it was supposed, the road to England. Then at last the poor Captain's stout heart gave way. His son the companion of swindlers! Could he be sure that he was not their accomplice? If not yet, how small the step between companionship and participation! He took the child left him still from the convent, returned to England, and arrived there to be seized with fever and delirium, — apparently on the same day or a day before that on which the son had dropped, shelterless and penniless, on the stones of London.



## CHAPTER VI.

THE ATTEMPT TO BUILD A TEMPLE TO FORTUNE OUT  
OF THE RUINS OF HOME.

"BUT," said Vivian, pursuing his tale, "but when you came to my aid, not knowing me; when you relieved me; when from your own lips, for the first time, I heard words that praised me, and for qualities that implied I might yet be 'worth much,' — ah!" he added mournfully, "I remember the very words, — a new light broke upon me, struggling and dim,

but light still. The ambition with which I had sought the truckling Frenchman revived, and took worthier and more definite form. I would lift myself above the mire, make a name, rise in life!"

Vivian's head drooped; but he raised it quickly, and laughed his low, mocking laugh. What follows of this tale may be told succinctly. Retaining his bitter feelings towards his father, he resolved to continue his incognito: he gave himself a name likely to mislead conjecture if I conversed of him to my family, since he knew that Roland was aware that a Colonel Vivian had been afflicted by a runaway son, — and, indeed, the talk upon that subject had first put the notion of flight into his own head. He caught at the idea of becoming known to Trevanion; but he saw reasons to forbid his being indebted to me for the introduction, to forbid my knowing where he was: sooner or later that knowledge could scarcely fail to end in the discovery of his real name. Fortunately, as he deemed, for the plans he began to meditate, we were all leaving London; he should have the stage to himself. And then boldly he resolved upon what he regarded as the master-scheme of life; namely, to obtain a small pecuniary independence and to emancipate himself formally and entirely from his father's control. Aware of poor Roland's chivalrous reverence for his name, firmly persuaded that Roland had no love for the son, but only the dread that the son might disgrace him, he determined to avail himself of his father's prejudices in order to effect his purpose.

He wrote a short letter to Roland (that letter which had given the poor man so sanguine a joy, — that letter after reading which he had said to Blanche, "Pray for me"), stating simply that he wished to see his father, and naming a tavern in the City for the meeting.

The interview took place. And when Roland — love and forgiveness in his heart, but (who shall blame him?) dignity on his brow and rebuke in his eye — approached, ready at a word to fling himself on the boy's breast, Vivian, seeing only the outer signs, and interpreting them by his own sentiments, recoiled, folded his arms on his bosom, and said, coldly,

"Spare me reproach, sir, — it is unavailing; I seek you only to propose that you shall save your name and resign your son."

Then, intent perhaps but to gain his object, the unhappy youth declared his fixed determination never to live with his father, never to acquiesce in his authority, resolutely to pursue his own career, whatever that career might be, explaining none of the circumstances that appeared most in his disfavor, — rather, perhaps, thinking that, the worse his father judged of him, the more chance he had to achieve his purpose. "All I ask of you," he said, "is this: Give me the least you can afford to preserve me from the temptation to rob, or the necessity to starve; and I, in my turn, promise never to molest you in life, never to degrade you in my death; whatever my misdeeds, they will never reflect on yourself, for you shall never recognize the misdoer! The name you prize so highly shall be spared." Sickened and revolted, Roland attempted no argument; there was that in the son's cold manner which shut out hope, and against which his pride rose indignant. A meeker man might have remonstrated, implored, and wept; that was not in Roland's nature. He had but the choice of three evils: to say to his son, "Fool, I command thee to follow me!" or say, "Wretch, since thou wouldst cast me off as a stranger, as a stranger I say to thee, — Go, starve or rob, as thou wilt!" or lastly, to bow his proud head, stunned by the blow, and say, "Thou refusest me the obedience of the son, thou demandest to be as the dead to me. I can control thee not from vice, I can guide thee not to virtue. Thou wouldst sell me the name I have inherited stainless, and have as stainless borne. Be it so! Name thy price!"

And something like this last was the father's choice.

He listened, and was long silent; and then he said slowly, "Pause before you decide."

"I have paused long; my decision is made! This is the last time we meet. I see before me now the way to fortune, fairly, honorably; you can aid me in it only in the way I have said. Reject me now, and the option may never come again to either!"

And then Roland said to himself, "I have spared and saved for this son: what care I for aught else than enough to live without debt, creep into a corner, and await the grave? And the more I can give, why, the better chance that he will abjure the vile associate and the desperate course." And so, out of his small income Roland surrendered to the rebel child more than the half.

Vivian was not aware of his father's fortune, — he did not suppose the sum of two hundred pounds a year was an allowance so disproportioned to Roland's means; yet when it was named, even he was struck by the generosity of one to whom he himself had given the right to say, "I take thee at thy word: 'Just enough not to starve!'"

But then that hateful cynicism, which, caught from bad men and evil books, he called "knowledge of the world," made him think, "It is not for me, it is only for his name;" and he said aloud, "I accept these terms, sir; here is the address of a solicitor with whom yours can settle them. Farewell forever."

At those last words Roland started, and stretched out his arms vaguely like a blind man. But Vivian had already thrown open the window (the room was on the ground floor) and sprung upon the sill. "Farewell," he repeated; "tell the world I am dead."

He leaped into the street, and the father drew in the outstretched arms, smote his heart, and said: "Well, then, my task in the world of man is over! I will back to the old ruin,—the wreck to the wrecks; and the sight of tombs I have at least rescued from dishonor shall comfort me for all!"

## CHAPTER VII.

THE RESULTS. — PERVERTED AMBITION. — SELFISH PASSION.

— THE INTELLECT DISTORTED BY THE CROOKEDNESS  
OF THE HEART.

VIVIAN's schemes thus prospered. He had an income that permitted him the outward appearances of a gentleman, — an independence modest, indeed, but independence still. We were all gone from London. One letter to me with the post-mark of the town near which Colonel Vivian lived, sufficed to confirm my belief in his parentage and in his return to his friends. He then presented himself to Trevanion as the young man whose pen I had employed in the member's service; and knowing that I had never mentioned his name to Trevanion, — for without Vivian's permission I should not, considering his apparent trust in me, have deemed myself authorized to do so, — he took that of Gower, which he selected, haphazard, from an old Court Guide as having the advantage — in common with most names borne by the higher nobility of England — of not being confined, as the ancient names of untitled gentlemen usually are, to the members of a single family. And when, with his wonted adaptability and suppleness, he had contrived to lay aside or smooth over whatever in his manners would be calculated to displease Trevanion, and had succeeded in exciting the interest which that generous statesman always conceived for ability, he owned candidly one day, in the presence of Lady Ellinor, — for his experience had taught him the comparative ease with which the sympathy of woman is enlisted in anything that appeals to the imagination, or seems out of the ordinary beat of life, — that he had reasons for concealing his connections for the present; that he had cause to believe I suspected what they were, and, from mistaken regard for his

welfare, might acquaint his relations with his whereabouts. He therefore begged Trevanion, if the latter had occasion to write to me, not to mention him. This promise Trevanion gave, though reluctantly, — for the confidence volunteered to him seemed to exact the promise; but as he detested mystery of all kinds, the avowal might have been fatal to any further acquaintance, and under auspices so doubtful, there would have been no chance of his obtaining that intimacy in Trevanion's house which he desired to establish, but for an accident which at once opened that house to him almost as a home.

Vivian had always treasured a lock of his mother's hair, cut off on her death-bed; and when he was at his French tutor's, his first pocket-money had been devoted to the purchase of a locket, on which he had caused to be inscribed his own name and his mother's. Through all his wanderings he had worn this relic; and in the direst pangs of want, no hunger had been keen enough to induce him to part with it. Now, one morning, the ribbon that suspended the locket gave way, and his eye resting on the names inscribed on the gold, he thought, in his own vague sense of right, imperfect as it was, that his compact with his father obliged him to have the names erased. He took it to a jeweller in Piccadilly for that purpose, and gave the requisite order, not taking notice of a lady in the farther part of the shop. The locket was still on the counter after Vivian had left, when the lady, coming forward, observed it, and saw the names on the surface. She had been struck by the peculiar tone of the voice, which she had heard before; and that very day Mr. Gower received a note from Lady Ellinor Trevanion, requesting to see him. Much wondering, he went. Presenting him with the locket, she said smiling, "There is only one gentleman in the world who calls himself *De Caxton*, unless it be his son. Ah! I see now why you wished to conceal yourself from my friend Pisistratus. But how is this? Can you have any difference with your father? Confide in me, or it is my duty to write to him."

Even Vivian's powers of dissimulation abandoned him, thus taken by surprise. He saw no alternative but to trust Lady Ellinor with his secret, and implore her to respect it. And



then he spoke bitterly of his father's dislike to him, and his own resolution to prove the injustice of that dislike by the position he would himself establish in the world. At present his father believed him dead, and perhaps was not ill-pleased to think so. He would not dispel that belief till he could redeem any boyish errors, and force his family to be proud to acknowledge him.

Though Lady Ellinor was slow to believe that Roland could dislike his son, she could yet readily believe that he was harsh and choleric, with a soldier's high notions of discipline; the young man's story moved her, his determination pleased her own high spirit. Always with a touch of romance in her, and always sympathizing with each desire of ambition, she entered into Vivian's aspirations with an alacrity that surprised himself. She was charmed with the idea of ministering to the son's fortunes, and ultimately reconciling him to the father, — through her own agency; it would atone for any fault of which Roland could accuse herself in the old time.

She undertook to impart the secret to Trevanion, for she would have no secrets from him, and to secure his acquiescence in its concealment from all others.

And here I must a little digress from the chronological course of my explanatory narrative to inform the reader that when Lady Ellinor had her interview with Roland, she had been repelled by the sternness of his manner from divulging Vivian's secret. But on her first attempt to sound or conciliate him, she had begun with some eulogies on Trevanion's new friend and assistant, Mr. Gower, and had awakened Roland's suspicions of that person's identity with his son, — suspicions which had given him a terrible interest in our joint deliverance of Miss Trevanion. But so heroically had the poor soldier sought to resist his own fears, that on the way he shrank to put to me the questions that might paralyze the energies which, whatever the answer, were then so much needed. "For," said he to my father, "I felt the blood surging to my temples; and if I had said to Pisistratus, 'Describe this man,' and by his description I had recognized my son, and dreaded lest I might be too late to arrest him from so treach-

erous a crime, my brain would have given way, — and so I did not dare!”

I return to the thread of my story. From the time that Vivian confided in Lady Ellinor, the way was cleared to his most ambitious hopes; and though his acquisitions were not sufficiently scholastic and various to permit Trevanion to select him as a secretary, yet, short of sleeping at the house, he was little less intimate there than I had been.

Among Vivian's schemes of advancement, that of winning the hand and heart of the great heiress had not been one of the least sanguine. This hope was annulled when, not long after his intimacy at her father's house, she became engaged to young Lord Castleton. But he could not see Miss Trevanion with impunity (alas! who, with a heart yet free, could be insensible to attractions so winning?). He permitted the love — such love as his wild, half-educated, half-savage nature acknowledged — to creep into his soul, to master it; but he felt no hope, cherished no scheme while the young lord lived. With the death of her betrothed, Fanny was free; then he began to hope, — not yet to scheme. Accidentally he encountered Peacock. Partly from the levity that accompanied a false good-nature that was constitutional with him, partly from a vague idea that the man might be useful, Vivian established his quondam associate in the service of Trevanion. Peacock soon gained the secret of Vivian's love for Fanny, and dazzled by the advantages that a marriage with Miss Trevanion would confer on his patron, and might reflect on himself, and delighted at an occasion to exercise his dramatic accomplishments on the stage of real life, he soon practised the lesson that the theatres had taught him; namely, to make a sub-intrigue between maid and valet serve the schemes and insure the success of the lover. If Vivian had some opportunities to imply his admiration, Miss Trevanion gave him none to plead his cause. But the softness of her nature, and that graceful kindness which surrounded her like an atmosphere, emanating unconsciously from a girl's harmless desire to please, tended to deceive him. His own personal gifts were so rare, and in his wandering life the effect they had produced

had so increased his reliance on them, that he thought he wanted but the fair opportunity to woo in order to win. In this state of mental intoxication, Trevanion, having provided for his Scotch secretary, took him to Lord N——'s. His hostess was one of those middle-aged ladies of fashion who like to patronize and bring forward young men, accepting gratitude for condescension as a homage to beauty. She was struck by Vivian's exterior, and that "picturesque" in look and in manner which belonged to him. Naturally garrulous and indiscreet, she was unreserved to a pupil whom she conceived the whim to make "*au fait* to society." Thus she talked to him, among other topics in fashion, of Miss Trevanion, and expressed her belief that the present Lord Castleton had always admired her; but it was only on his accession to the marquise that he had made up his mind to marry, or, from his knowledge of Lady Ellinor's ambition, thought that the Marquis of Castleton might achieve the prize which would have been refused to Sir Sedley Beaudesert. Then, to corroborate the predictions she hazarded, she repeated, perhaps with exaggeration, some passages from Lord Castleton's replies to her own suggestions on the subject. Vivian's alarm became fatally excited; unregulated passions easily obscured a reason so long perverted, and a conscience so habitually dulled. There is an instinct in all intense affection (whether it be corrupt or pure) that usually makes its jealousy prophetic. Thus, from the first, out of all the brilliant idlers round Fanny Trevanion, my jealousy had pre-eminently fastened on Sir Sedley Beaudesert, though, to all seeming, without a cause. From the same instinct Vivian had conceived the same vague jealousy, — a jealousy, in his instance, coupled with a deep dislike to his supposed rival, who had wounded his self-love. For the marquis, though to be haughty or ill-bred was impossible to the blandness of his nature, had never shown to Vivian the genial courtesies he had lavished upon me, and kept politely aloof from his acquaintance; while Vivian's personal vanity had been wounded by that drawing-room effect which the proverbial winner of all hearts produced without an effort, — an effect that threw into the shade the youth and the

beauty (more striking, but infinitely less prepossessing) of the adventurous rival. Thus animosity to Lord Castleton conspired with Vivian's passion for Fanny to rouse all that was worst by nature and by rearing in this audacious and turbulent spirit.

His confidant Peacock suggested, from his stage experience, the outlines of a plot, to which Vivian's astuter intellect instantly gave tangibility and coloring. Peacock had already found Miss Trevanion's waiting-woman ripe for any measure that might secure himself as her husband and a provision for life as a reward. Two or three letters between them settled the preliminary engagements. A friend of the ex-comedian's had lately taken an inn on the north road, and might be relied upon. At that inn it was settled that Vivian should meet Miss Trevanion, whom Peacock, by the aid of the abigail, engaged to lure there. The sole difficulty that then remained would, to most men, have seemed the greatest; namely, the consent of Miss Trevanion to a Scotch marriage. But Vivian hoped all things from his own eloquence, art, and passion; and by an inconsistency, however strange, still not unnatural in the twists of so crooked an intellect, he thought that by insisting on the intention of her parents to sacrifice her youth to the very man of whose attractions he was most jealous, — by the picture of disparity of years, by the caricature of his rival's foibles and frivolities, by the commonplaces of "beauty bartered for ambition," etc., — he might enlist her fears of the alternative on the side of the choice urged upon her. The plan proceeded, the time came: Peacock pretended the excuse of a sick relation to leave Trevanion; and Vivian a day before, on pretence of visiting the picturesque scenes in the neighborhood, obtained leave of absence. Thus the plot went on to its catastrophe.

"And I need not ask," said I, trying in vain to conceal my indignation, "how Miss Trevanion received your monstrous proposition!"

Vivian's pale cheek grew paler, but he made no reply.

"And if we had not arrived, what would you have done? Oh, dare you look into the gulf of infamy you have escaped!"

"I cannot and I will not bear this!" exclaimed Vivian, starting up. "I have laid my heart bare before you, and it is ungenerous and unmanly thus to press upon its wounds. You can moralize, you can speak coldly; but — I — I loved!"

"And do you think," I burst forth, "do you think that I did not love too, — love longer than you have done; better than you have done; gone through sharper struggles, darker days, more sleepless nights than you; and yet —"

Vivian caught hold of me.

"Hush!" he cried; "is this indeed true? I thought you might have had some faint and fleeting fancy for Miss Trevanion, but that you curbed and conquered it at once. Oh, no! It was impossible to have loved really, and to have surrendered all chance as you did, — have left the house, have fled from her presence! No, no; that was not love!"

"It *was* love! And I pray Heaven to grant that, one day, you may know how little your affection sprang from those feelings which make true love sublime as honor, and meek as is religion! Oh, cousin, cousin, with those rare gifts, what you might have been; what, if you will pass through repentance and cling to atonement, what, I dare hope, you may yet be! Talk not now of your love; I talk not of mine! Love is a thing gone from the lives of both. Go back to earlier thoughts, to heavier wrongs, — your father, that noble heart which you have so wantonly lacerated, which you have so little comprehended!"

Then, with all the warmth of emotion, I hurried on, — showed him the true nature of honor and of Roland (for the names were one!); showed him the watch, the hope, the manly anguish I had witnessed, and wept — I, not his son — to see; showed him the poverty and privation to which the father, even at the last, had condemned himself, so that the son might have no excuse for the sins that Want whispers to the weak. This and much more, and I suppose with the pathos that belongs to all earnestness, I enforced, sentence after sentence, yielding to no interruption, overmastering all dissent, driving in the truth, nail after nail, as it were, into the obdurate heart that I constrained and grappled to. And at

last the dark, bitter, cynical nature gave way, and the young man fell sobbing at my feet and cried aloud, "Spare me, spare me! I see it all now, wretch that I have been!"

---

## CHAPTER VIII.

ON leaving Vivian I did not presume to promise him Roland's immediate pardon. I did not urge him to attempt to see his father. I felt the time was not come for either pardon or interview. I contented myself with the victory I had already gained. I judged it right that thought, solitude, and suffering should imprint more deeply the lesson, and prepare the way to the steadfast resolution of reform. I left him seated by the stream, and with the promise to inform him at the small hostelry, where he took up his lodging, how Roland struggled through his illness.

On returning to the inn I was uneasy to see how long a time had elapsed since I had left my uncle. But on coming into his room, to my surprise and relief I found him up and dressed, and with a serene, though fatigued, expression of countenance. He asked me no questions where I had been, — perhaps from sympathy with my feelings in parting with Miss Trevanion; perhaps from conjecture that the indulgence of those feelings had not wholly engrossed my time.

But he said simply, "I think I understood from you that you had sent for Austin, — is it so?"

"Yes, sir; but I named —, as the nearest point to the Tower, for the place of meeting."

"Then let us go hence forthwith, — nay, I shall be better for the change. And here there must be curiosity, conjecture, torture!" said he, locking his hands tightly together. "Order the horses at once!"

I left the room accordingly; and while they were getting

ready the horses, I ran to the place where I had left Vivian. He was still there, in the same attitude, covering his face with his hands, as if to shut out the sun. I told him hastily of Roland's improvement, of our approaching departure, and asked him an address in London at which I could find him. He gave me as his direction the same lodging at which I had so often visited him. "If there be no vacancy there for me," said he, "I shall leave word where I am to be found. But I would gladly be where I was before —" He did not finish the sentence. I pressed his hand, and left him.

---

## CHAPTER IX.

SOME days have elapsed: we are in London, my father with us; and Roland has permitted Austin to tell me his tale, and received through Austin all that Vivian's narrative to me suggested, whether in extenuation of the past or in hope of redemption in the future. And Austin has inexpressibly soothed his brother. And Roland's ordinary roughness has gone, and his looks are meek and his voice low. But he talks little, and smiles never. He asks me no questions, does not to *me* name his son, nor recur to the voyage to Australia, nor ask why it is put off, nor interest himself, as before, in preparations for it, — he has no heart for anything.

The voyage *is* put off till the next vessel sails, and I have seen Vivian twice or thrice, and the result of the interviews has disappointed and depressed me. It seems to me that much of the previous effect I had produced is already obliterated. At the very sight of the great Babel, — the evidence of the ease, the luxury, the wealth, the pomp; the strife, the penury, the famine, and the rags, which the focus of civilization, in the disparities of old societies, inevitably gathers together, — the fierce, combative disposition seemed to awaken

again; the perverted ambition, the hostility to the world; the wrath, the scorn; the war with man, and the rebellious murmur against Heaven. There was still the one redeeming point of repentance for his wrongs to his father, — his heart was still softened there; and, attendant on that softness, I hailed a principle more like that of honor than I had yet recognized in Vivian. He cancelled the agreement which had assured him of a provision at the cost of his father's comforts. "At least there," he said, "I will injure him no more!"

But while on this point repentance seemed genuine, it was not so with regard to his conduct towards Miss Trevanion. His gypsy nurture, his loose associates, his extravagant French romances, his theatrical mode of looking upon love intrigues and stage plots, seemed all to rise between his intelligence and the due sense of the fraud and treachery he had practised. He seemed to feel more shame at the exposure than at the guilt, more despair at the failure of success than gratitude at escape from crime. In a word, the nature of a whole life was not to be remodelled at once, — at least by an artificer so unskilled as I.

After one of these interviews I stole into the room where Austin sat with Roland, and watching a seasonable moment when Roland, shaking off a revery, opened his Bible and sat down to it, with each muscle in his face set, as I had seen it before, into iron resolution, I beckoned my father from the room.

PISISTRATUS. — "I have again seen my cousin. I cannot make the way I wished. My dear father, *you* must see him."

MR. CAXTON. — "I? Yes, assuredly, if I can be of any service. But will he listen to me?"

PISISTRATUS. — "I think so. A young man will often respect in his elder what he will resent as a presumption in his contemporary."

MR. CAXTON. — "It may be so. [Then more thoughtfully] But you describe this strange boy's mind as a wreck! In what part of the mouldering timbers can I fix the grappling-hook? Here it seems that most of the supports on which we can best rely, when we would save another, fail us, —



religion, honor, the associations of childhood, the bonds of home, filial obedience, even the intelligence of self-interest, in the philosophical sense of the word. And I, too,—a mere bookman! My dear son, I despair!”

PISISTRATUS.—“No, you do not despair; no, you must succeed,—for if you do not, what is to become of Uncle Roland? Do you not see his heart is fast breaking?”

MR. CAXTON.—“Get me my hat. I will go; I will save this Ishmael,—I will not leave him till he is saved!”

PISISTRATUS (some minutes after, as they are walking towards Vivian’s lodging).—“You ask me what support you are to cling to: a strong and a good one, sir.”

MR. CAXTON.—“Ah! what is that?”

PISISTRATUS.—“Affection! There is a nature capable of strong affection at the core of this wild heart. He could love his mother,—tears gush to his eyes at her name; he would have starved rather than part with the memorial of that love. It was his belief in his father’s indifference or dislike that hardened and imbruted him; it is only when he hears how that father loved him that I now melt his pride and curb his passions. You have affection to deal with! Do you despair now?”

My father turned on me those eyes so inexpressibly benign and mild, and replied softly, “No!”

We reached the house; and my father said, as we knocked at the door, “If he is at home, leave me. This is a hard study to which you have set me; I must work at it alone.”

Vivian was at home, and the door closed on his visitor. My father stayed some hours.

On returning home, to my great surprise I found Trevanion with my uncle. He had found us out,—no easy matter, I should think. But a good impulse in Trevanion was not of that feeble kind which turns home at the sight of a difficulty. He had come to London on purpose to see and to thank us.

I did not think there had been so much of delicacy—of what I may call the “beauty of kindness”—in a man whom incessant business had rendered ordinarily blunt and abrupt. I hardly recognized the impatient Trevanion in the soothing,

tender, subtle respect that rather implied than spoke gratitude, and sought to insinuate what he owed to the unhappy father, without touching on his wrongs from the son. But of this kindness — which showed how Trevanion's high nature of gentleman raised him aloof from that coarseness of thought which those absorbed wholly in practical affairs often contract — of this kindness, so noble and so touching, Roland seemed scarcely aware. He sat by the embers of the neglected fire, his hands grasping the arms of his elbow-chair, his head drooping on his bosom; and only by a deep hectic flush on his dark cheek could you have seen that he distinguished between an ordinary visitor and the man whose child he had helped to save. This minister of state, this high member of the elect, at whose gift are places, peerages, gold-sticks, and ribbons, has nothing at his command for the bruised spirit of the half-pay soldier. Before that poverty, that grief, and that pride, the King's Counsellor was powerless. Only when Trevanion rose to depart, something like a sense of the soothing intention which the visit implied seemed to rouse the repose of the old man and to break the ice at its surface; for he followed Trevanion to the door, took both his hands, pressed them, then turned away, and resumed his seat. Trevanion beckoned to me, and I followed him downstairs and into a little parlor which was unoccupied.

After some remarks upon Roland, full of deep and considerate feeling, and one quick, hurried reference to the son, — to the effect that his guilty attempt would never be known by the world, — Trevanion then addressed himself to me with a warmth and urgency that took me by surprise. "After what has passed," he exclaimed, "I cannot suffer you to leave England thus. Let me not feel with you, as with your uncle, that there is nothing by which I can repay — No, I will not so put it, — stay, and serve your country at home; it is my prayer, it is Ellinor's. Out of all at my disposal it will go hard but what I shall find something to suit you." And then, hurrying on, Trevanion spoke flatteringly of my pretensions, in right of birth and capabilities, to honorable employment, and placed before me a picture of public life, its prizes and distinctions,

which for the moment, at least, made my heart beat loud and my breath come quick. But still, even then I felt (was it an unreasonable pride?) that there was something that jarred, something that humbled, in the thought of holding all my fortunes as a dependency on the father of the woman I loved, but might not aspire to; something even of personal degradation in the mere feeling that I was thus to be repaid for a service, and recompensed for a loss. But these were not reasons I could advance; and, indeed, so for the time did Trevanion's generosity and eloquence overpower me that I could only falter out my thanks and my promise that I would consider and let him know.

With that promise he was forced to content himself; he told me to direct to him at his favorite country seat, whither he was going that day, and so left me. I looked round the humble parlor of the mean lodging-house, and Trevanion's words came again before me like a flash of golden light. I stole into the open air and wandered through the crowded streets, agitated and disturbed.

---

## CHAPTER X.

SEVERAL days elapsed, and of each day my father spent a considerable part at Vivian's lodgings. But he maintained a reserve as to his success, begged me not to question him, and to refrain also for the present from visiting my cousin. My uncle guessed or knew his brother's mission; for I observed that whenever Austin went noiseless away, his eye brightened, and the color rose in a hectic flush to his cheek. At last my father came to me one morning, his carpet-bag in his hand, and said, "I am going away for a week or two. Keep Roland company till I return."

"Going with *him*?"

"With him."

"That is a good sign."

"I hope so; that is all I can say now."

The week had not quite passed when I received from my father the letter I am about to place before the reader; and you may judge how earnestly his soul must have been in the task it had volunteered, if you observe how little, comparatively speaking, the letter contains of the subtleties and p-dantries (may the last word be pardoned, for it is scarcely a just one) which ordinarily left my father, — a scholar even in the midst of his emotions. He seemed here to have abandoned his books, to have put the human heart before the eyes of his pupil, and said, "Read and *un*-learn!"

#### TO PISISTRATUS CAXTON.

MY DEAR SON, — It were needless to tell you all the earlier difficulties I have had to encounter with my charge, nor to repeat all the means which, acting on your suggestion (a correct one), I have employed to arouse feelings long dormant and confused, and allay others long prematurely active and terribly distinct. The evil was simply this: here was the intelligence of a man in all that is evil, and the ignorance of an infant in all that is good. In matters merely worldly, what wonderful acumen; in the plain principles of right and wrong, what gross and stolid obtuseness! At one time I am straining all my poor wit to grapple in an encounter on the knottiest mysteries of social life; at another, I am guiding reluctant fingers over the horn-book of the most obvious morals. Here hieroglyphics, and there pot-hooks! But as long as there is affection in a man, why, there is Nature to begin with! To get rid of all the rubbish laid upon her, clear back the way to that Nature and start afresh, — that is one's only chance.

Well, by degrees I won my way, waiting patiently till the bosom, pleased with the relief, disgorged itself of all "its perilous stuff," — not chiding, not even remonstrating, seeming almost to sympathize, till I got him, Socratically, to disprove himself. When I saw that he no longer feared me, that my company had become a relief to him, I proposed an excursion, and did not tell him whither.

Avoiding as much as possible the main north road (for I did not wish, as you may suppose, to set fire to a train of associations that might blow us up to the dog-star), and where that avoidance was not possible, travelling by night, I got him into the neighborhood of the old Tower.

I would not admit him under its roof. But you know the little inn, three miles off, near the trout stream? We made our abode there.

Well, I have taken him into the village, preserving his incognito. I have entered with him into cottages, and turned the talk upon Roland. You know how your uncle is adored; you know what anecdotes of his bold, warm-hearted youth once, and now of his kind and charitable age, would spring up from the garrulous lips of gratitude! I made him see with his own eyes, hear with his own ears, how all who knew Roland loved and honored him, — except his son. Then I took him round the ruins (still not suffering him to enter the house); for those ruins are the key to Roland's character, — seeing them, one sees the pathos in his poor foible of family pride. There, you distinguish it from the insolent boasts of the prosperous, and feel that it is little more than the pious reverence to the dead, — "the tender culture of the tomb." We sat down on heaps of mouldering stone, and it was there that I explained to him what Roland was in youth, and what he had dreamed that a son would be to him. I showed him the graves of his ancestors, and explained to him why they were sacred in Roland's eyes. I had gained a great way when he longed to enter the home that should have been his and I could make him pause of his own accord and say, "No, I must first be worthy of it." Then you would have smiled — sly satirist that you are — to have heard me impressing upon this acute, sharp-witted youth all that we plain folk understand by the name of HOME, — its perfect trust and truth, its simple holiness, its exquisite happiness, being to the world what conscience is to the human mind. And after that I brought in his sister, whom till then he had scarcely named, for whom he scarcely seemed to care, — brought her in to aid the father and endear the home. "And you know," said I, "that if Roland were to die, it would be a brother's duty to supply his place, — to shield her innocence, to protect her name! A good name is something, then. Your father was not so wrong to prize it. You would like yours to be that which your sister would be proud to own!"

While we were talking, Blanche suddenly came to the spot, and rushed to my arms. She looked on him as a stranger, but I saw his knees tremble. And then she was about to put her hand in his, but I drew her back. Was I cruel? He thought so. But when I dismissed her, I replied to his reproach: "Your sister is a part of Home. If you think yourself worthy of either, go and claim both; I will not object." "She has my mother's eyes," said he, and walked away. I left him to muse amidst the ruins, while I went in to see your poor mother and relieve her fears about Roland and make her understand why I could not yet return home.

This brief sight of his sister has sunk deep into him. But I now approach what seems to me the great difficulty of the whole. He is fully anxious to redeem his name, to regain his home. So far so well. But he cannot yet see ambition, except with hard, worldly eyes. He still fancies that all he has to do is to get money and power and some of those empty prizes in the Great Lottery which we often win more easily by our sins than our virtues. [Here follows a long passage from Seneca, omitted as superfluous.] He does not yet even understand me — or if he does, he fancies me a mere book-worm indeed — when I imply that he might be poor and obscure, at the bottom of fortune's wheel, and yet be one we should be proud of. He supposes that to redeem his name he has only got to lacker it. Don't think me merely the fond father when I add my hope that I shall use you to advantage here. I mean to talk to him to-morrow, as we return to London, of you and of your ambition; you shall hear the result.

At this moment (it is past midnight) I hear his step in the room above me. The window-sash aloft opens, for the third time. Would to Heaven he could read the true astrology of the stars! There they are, — bright, luminous, benignant. And I seeking to chain this wandering comet into the harmonies of heaven! Better task than that of astrologers, and astronomers to boot! Who among them can "loosen the band of Orion"? But who amongst us may not be permitted by God to have sway over the action and orbit of the human soul?

Your ever-affectionate father,

A. C.

Two days after the receipt of this letter came the following; and though I would fain suppress those references to myself which must be ascribed to a father's partiality, yet it is so needful to retain them in connection with Vivian that I have no choice but to leave the tender flatteries to the indulgence of the kind.

MY DEAR SON, — I was not too sanguine as to the effect that your simple story would produce upon your cousin. Without implying any contrast to his own conduct, I described that scene in which you threw yourself upon our sympathy, in the struggle between love and duty, and asked for our counsel and support; when Roland gave you his blunt advice to tell all to Trevanion; and when, amidst such sorrow as the heart in youth seems scarcely large enough to hold, you caught at truth impulsively, and the truth bore you safe from the shipwreck. I recounted

your silent and manly struggles, your resolution not to suffer the egotism of passion to unfit you for the aims and ends of that spiritual probation which we call *LIFE*. I showed you as you were, — still thoughtful for us, interested in our interests, smiling on us, that we might not guess that you wept in secret ! Oh, my son, my son, do not think that in those times I did not feel and pray for you ! And while he was melted by my own emotion, I turned from your love to your ambition. I made him see that you too had known the restlessness which belongs to young, ardent natures ; that you too had had your dreams of fortune and aspirations for success. But I painted that ambition in its true colors : it was not the desire of a selfish intellect to be in yourself a somebody, a something, raised a step or two in the social ladder, for the pleasure of looking down on those at the foot, but the warmer yearning of a generous heart ; your ambition was to repair your father's losses, minister to your father's very foible in his idle desire of fame, supply to your uncle what he had lost in his natural heir, link your success to useful objects, your interests to those of your kind, your reward to the proud and grateful smiles of those you loved. That was thine ambition, O my tender Anachronism ! And when, as I closed the sketch, I said, " Pardon me, you know not what delight a father feels when, while sending a son away from him into the world, he can speak and think thus of him. But this, you see, is not your kind of ambition. Let us talk of making money, and driving a coach-and-four through this villanous world," — your cousin sank into a profound revery ; and when he woke from it, it was like the waking of the earth after a night in spring, — the bare trees had put forth buds !

And, some time after, he startled me by a prayer that I would permit him, with his father's consent, to accompany you to Australia. The only answer I have given him as yet has been in the form of a question : " Ask yourself if I ought ? I cannot wish Pisiistratus to be other than he is ; and unless you agree with him in all his principles and objects, ought I to incur the risk that you should give him your knowledge of the world and inoculate him with your ambition ? " He was struck, and had the candor to attempt no reply.

Now, Pisiistratus, the doubt I expressed to him is the doubt I feel. For, indeed, it is only by home-truths, not refining arguments, that I can deal with this unscholastic Scythian, who, fresh from the Steppes, comes to puzzle me in the Portico.

On the one hand, what is to become of him in the Old World ? At his age and with his energies it would be impossible to cage him with us in the Cumberland ruins ; weariness and discontent would undo all we could do. He has no resource in books, and I fear never will

have! But to send him forth into one of the over-crowded professions; to place him amidst all those "disparities of social life," on the rough stones of which he is perpetually grinding his heart; turn him adrift amongst all the temptations to which he is most prone, — this is a trial which, I fear, will be too sharp for a conversion so incomplete. In the New World, no doubt, his energies would find a safer field, and even the adventurous and desultory habits of his childhood might there be put to healthful account. Those complaints of the disparities of the civilized world find, I suspect, an easier, if a bluffer, reply from the political economist than the Stoic philosopher. "You don't like them, you find it hard to submit to them," says the political economist; "but they are the laws of a civilized state, and you can't alter them. Wiser men than you have tried to alter them, and never succeeded, though they turned the earth topsy-turvy! Very well; but the world is wide, — go into a state that is not so civilized. The disparities of the Old World vanish amidst the New! Emigration is the reply of Nature to the rebellious cry against Art." Thus would say the political economist; and, alas, even in your case, my son, I found no reply to the reasonings! I acknowledge, then, that Australia might open the best safety-valve to your cousin's discontent and desires; but I acknowledge also a counter-truth, which is this: "It is not permitted to an honest man to corrupt himself for the sake of others." That is almost the only maxim of Jean Jacques to which I can cheerfully subscribe! Do you feel quite strong enough to resist all the influences which a companionship of this kind may subject you to; strong enough to bear his burden as well as your own; strong enough, also, — ay, and alert and vigilant enough, — to prevent those influences harming the others whom you have undertaken to guide, and whose lots are confided to you? Pause well and consider maturely, for this must not depend upon a generous impulse. I think that your cousin would now pass under your charge with a sincere desire for reform; but between sincere desire and steadfast performance there is a long and dreary interval, even to the best of us. Were it not for Roland, and had I one grain less confidence in you, I could not entertain the thought of laying on your young shoulders so great a responsibility. But every new responsibility to an earnest nature is a new prop to virtue; and all I now ask of you is to remember that it is a solemn and serious charge, not to be undertaken without the most deliberate gauge and measure of the strength with which it is to be borne.

In two days we shall be in London.

Yours, my Anachronism, anxiously and fondly,

A. C.



I was in my own room while I read this letter, and I had just finished it when, as I looked up, I saw Roland standing opposite to me. "It is from Austin," said he; then he paused a moment, and added, in a tone that seemed quite humble, "may I see it, — and dare I?" I placed the letter in his hands, and retired a few paces, that he might not think I watched his countenance while he read it. And I was only aware that he had come to the end by a heavy, anxious, but not disappointed sigh. Then I turned, and our eyes met; and there was something in Roland's look, inquiring and, as it were, imploring. I interpreted it at once.

"Oh, yes, uncle!" I said, smiling; "I have reflected, and I have no fear of the result. Before my father wrote, what he now suggests had become my secret wish. As for our other companions, their simple natures would defy all such sophistries as — But he is already half-cured of those. Let him come with me, and when he returns he shall be worthy of a place in your heart beside his sister Blanche. I feel, I promise it; do not fear for me! Such a charge will be a talisman to myself. I will shun every error that I might otherwise commit, so that he may have no example to entice him to err."

I know that in youth, and the superstition of first love, we are credulously inclined to believe that love and the possession of the beloved are the only happiness. But when my uncle folded me in his arms and called me the hope of his age and stay of his house, — the music of my father's praise still ringing on my heart, — I do affirm that I knew a prouder bliss than if Trevanion had placed Fanny's hand in mine and said, "She is yours."

And now the die was cast, the decision made. It was with no regret that I wrote to Trevanion to decline his offers. Nor was the sacrifice so great — even putting aside the natural pride which had before inclined to it — as it may seem to some; for restless though I was, I had labored to constrain myself to other views of life than those which close the vistas of ambition with images of the terrestrial deities, Power and Rank. Had I not been behind the scenes, noted all of joy and of peace that the pursuit of power had cost Trevanion, and

seen how little of happiness rank gave even to one of the polished habits and graceful attributes of Lord Castleton? Yet each nature seemed fitted so well, — the first for power, the last for rank! It is marvellous with what liberality Providence atones for the partial dispensations of Fortune. Independence, or the vigorous pursuit of it; affection, with its hopes and its rewards; a life only rendered by Art more susceptible to Nature, in which the physical enjoyments are pure and healthful, in which the moral faculties expand harmoniously with the intellectual, and the heart is at peace with the mind, — is this a mean lot for ambition to desire, and is it so far out of human reach? “Know thyself,” said the old philosophy. “Improve thyself,” saith the new. The great object of the Sojourner in Time is not to waste all his passions and gifts on the things external that he must leave behind, — that which he cultivates within is all that he can carry into the Eternal Progress. We are here but as schoolboys, whose life begins where school ends; and the battles we fought with our rivals, and the toys that we shared with our playmates, and the names that we carved, high or low, on the wall above our desks, — will they so much bestead us hereafter? As new fates crowd upon us, can they more than pass through the memory with a smile or a sigh? Look back to thy school-days and answer.

---

## CHAPTER XI.

Two weeks since the date of the preceding chapter have passed; we have slept our last, for long years to come, on the English soil. It is night, and Vivian has been admitted to an interview with his father. They have been together alone an hour and more, and I and my father will not disturb them. But the clock strikes, the hour is late, the ship-sails to-night;









we should be on board. And as we two stand below, the door opens in the room above, and a heavy step descends the stairs: the father is leaning on the son's arm. You should see how timidly the son guides the halting step. And now, as the light gleams on their faces, there are tears on Vivian's cheek; but the face of Roland seems calm and happy. Happy, when about to be separated, perhaps forever, from his son? Yes, happy, because he has found a son for the first time, and is not thinking of years and absence and the chance of death, but thankful for the Divine Mercy, and cherishing celestial hope. If ye wonder why Roland is happy in such an hour, how vainly have I sought to make him breathe and live and move before you!

We are on board; our luggage all went first. I had had time, with the help of a carpenter, to knock up cabins for Vivian, Guy Bolding, and myself in the hold; for thinking we could not too soon lay aside the pretensions of Europe, — "*define-gentlemanize*" ourselves, as Trevanion recommended, — we had engaged steerage passage, to the great humoring of our finances. We had, too, the luxury to be by ourselves, and our own Cumberland folks were round us, as our friends and servants both.

We are on board, and have looked our last on those we are to leave, and we stand on deck leaning on each other. We are on board, and the lights, near and far, shine from the vast City; and the stars are on high, bright and clear, as for the first mariners of old. Strange noises, rough voices, and crackling cords, and here and there the sobs of women, mingling with the oaths of men. Now the swing and heave of the vessel, the dreary sense of exile that comes when the ship fairly moves over the waters. And still we stood and looked and listened, silent, and leaning on each other.

Night deepened, the City vanished: not a gleam from its myriad lights! The river widened and widened. How cold comes the wind, — is that a gale from the sea? The stars grow faint, the moon has sunk. And now, how desolate seem the waters in the comfortless gray of dawn! Then we

shivered and looked at each other, and muttered something that was not the thought deepest at our hearts, and crept into our berths, feeling sure it was not for sleep. And sleep came on us, soft and kind. The ocean lulled the exiles as on a mother's breast.



## PART XVII.

## CHAPTER I.

THE stage-scene has dropped. Settle yourselves, my good audience; chat each with his neighbor. Dear madam in the boxes, take up your opera-glass and look about you. Treat Tom and pretty Sal to some of those fine oranges, O thou happy-looking mother in the two-shilling gallery! Yes, brave 'prentice-boys in the tier above, the cat-call by all means! And you, "most potent, grave, and reverend signiors" in the front row of the pit, practised critics and steady old play-goers, who shake your heads at new actors and playwrights, and, true to the creed of your youth (for the which all honor to you!), firmly believe that we are shorter by the head than those giants our grandfathers, — laugh or scold as you will, while the drop-scene still shuts out the stage. It is just that you should all amuse yourselves in your own way, O spectators! for the interval is long. All the actors have to change their dresses; all the scene-shifters are at work sliding the "sides" of a new world into their grooves; and in high disdain of all unity of time, as of place, you will see in the play-bills that there is a great demand on your belief. You are called upon to suppose that we are older by five years than when you last saw us "fret our hour upon the stage." Five years! the author tells us especially to humor the belief by letting the drop-scene linger longer than usual between the lamps and the stage.

Play up, O ye fiddles and kettle-drums! the time is elapsed. Stop that cat-call, young gentleman; heads down in the pit

there! Now the flourish is over, the scene draws up: look before.

A bright, clear, transparent atmosphere, — bright as that of the East, but vigorous and bracing as the air of the North; a broad and fair river, rolling through wide grassy plains; yonder, far in the distance, stretch away vast forests of evergreen, and gentle slopes break the line of the cloudless horizon. See the pastures, Arcadian with sheep in hundreds and thousands, — Thyrsis and Menalcas would have had hard labor to count them, and small time, I fear, for singing songs about Daphne. But, alas! Daphnes are rare; no nymphs with garlands and crooks trip over those pastures.

Turn your eyes to the right, nearer the river; just parted by a low fence from the thirty acres or so that are farmed for amusement or convenience, not for profit, — *that* comes from the sheep, — you catch a glimpse of a garden. Look not so scornfully at the primitive horticulture: such gardens are rare in the Bush. I doubt if the stately King of the Peak ever more rejoiced in the famous conservatory, through which you may drive in your carriage, than do the sons of the Bush in the herbs and blossoms which taste and breathe of the old fatherland. Go on, and behold the palace of the patriarchs, — it is of wood, I grant you; but the house we build with our own hands is always a palace. Did you ever build one when you were a boy? And the lords of that palace are lords of the land almost as far as you can see, and of those numberless flocks; and, better still, of a health which an antediluvian might have envied, and of nerves so seasoned with horse-breaking, cattle-driving, fighting with wild blacks, — chases from them and after them, for life and for death, — that if any passion vex the breast of those kings of the Bushland, fear at least is erased from the list.

See here and there through the landscape 'rude huts like the masters': wild spirits and fierce dwell within. But they are tamed into order by plenty and hope; by the hand open but firm, by the eye keen but just.

Now out from those woods, over those green rolling plains, harum-scarum, helter-skelter, long hair flying wild, and all

bearded as a Turk or a pard, comes a rider you recognize. The rider dismounts, and another old acquaintance turns from a shepherd, with whom he has been conversing on matters that never plagued Thyrsis and Menalcas,—whose sheep seem to have been innocent of foot-rot and scab,—and accosts the horseman.

PISISTRATUS. — “My dear Guy, where on earth have you been?”

GUY (producing a book from his pocket, with great triumph). — “There! Dr. Johnson’s ‘Lives of the Poets.’ I could not get the squatter to let me have ‘Kenilworth,’ though I offered him three sheep for it. Dull old fellow, that Dr. Johnson, I suspect,—so much the better, the book will last all the longer. And here’s a Sydney paper, too, only two months old!” (Guy takes a short pipe, or dudeen, from his hat, in the band of which it had been stuck, fills and lights it.)

PISISTRATUS. — “You must have ridden thirty miles at the least. To think of *your* turning book-hunter, Guy!”

GUY BOLDING (philosophically). — “Ay, one don’t know the worth of a thing till one has lost it. No sneers at me, old fellow; you, too, declared that you were bothered out of your life by those books till you found how long the evenings were without them. Then, the first new book we got—an old volume of the ‘Spectator!’—such fun!”

PISISTRATUS. — “Very true. The brown cow has calved in your absence. Do you know, Guy, I think we shall have no scab in the fold this year. If so, there will be a rare sum to lay by! Things look up with us now, Guy.”

GUY BOLDING. — “Yes. Very different from the first two years. You drew a long face then. How wise you were, to insist on our learning experience at another man’s station before we hazarded our own capital! But, by Jove! those sheep at first were enough to plague a man out his wits. What with the wild dogs, just as the sheep had been washed and ready to shear; then that cursed scabby sheep of Joe Timmes’s, that we caught rubbing his sides so complacently against our unsuspecting poor ewes. I wonder we did not run away. But *Patientia fit*,—what is that line in Horace?

Never mind now. 'It is a long lane that has no turning' does just as well as anything in Horace, and Virgil to boot. I say, has not Vivian been here?"

PISISTRATUS. — "No; but he will be sure to come to-day."

GUY BOLDING. — "He has much the best berth of it. Horse-breeding and cattle-feeding: galloping after those wild devils; lost in a forest of horns; beasts lowing, scampering, goring, tearing off like mad buffaloes; horses galloping up hill, down hill, over rocks, stones, and timber; whips crackling, men shouting, your neck all but broken; a great bull making at you full rush. Such fun! Sheep are dull things to look at after a bull-hunt and a cattle-feast."

PISISTRATUS. — "Every man to his taste in the Bush. One may make one's money more easily and safely, with more adventure and sport, in the bucolic department; but one makes larger profit and quicker fortune, with good luck and good care, in the pastoral, — and our object, I take it, is to get back to England as soon as we can."

GUY BOLDING. — "Humph! I should be content to live and die in the Bush, — nothing like it, if women were not so scarce. To think of the redundant spinster population at home, and not a spinster here to be seen within thirty miles, — save Bet Goggins, indeed, and she has only one eye! But to return to Vivian: why should it be our object, more than his, to get back to England as soon as we can?"

PISISTRATUS. — "Not more, certainly. But you saw that an excitement more stirring than that we find in the sheep had become necessary to him. You know he was growing dull and dejected; the cattle station was to be sold a bargain. And then the Durham bulls and the Yorkshire horses which Mr. Trevanion sent you and me out as presents, were so tempting, I thought we might fairly add one speculation to another; and since one of us must superintend the bucolics, and two of us were required for the pastorals, I think Vivian was the best of us three to intrust with the first, — and certainly it has succeeded as yet."

GUY. — "Why, yes, Vivian is quite in his element, — always in action, and always in command. Let him be first in every-

thing, and there is not a finer fellow, nor a better tempered, — present company excepted. Hark! the dogs, the crack of the whip; there he is. And now, I suppose, we may go to dinner."

(*Enter VIVIAN.*) His frame has grown more athletic; his eye, more steadfast and less restless, looks you full in the face. His smile is more open, but there is a melancholy in his expression almost approaching to gloom. His dress is the same as that of Pisistratus and Guy, — white vest and trousers; loose neckcloth, rather gay in color; broad cabbage-leaf hat; his mustache and beard are trimmed with more care than ours. He has a large whip in his hand, and a gun slung across his shoulders. Greetings are exchanged; mutual inquiries as to cattle and sheep, and the last horses despatched to the Indian market. Guy shows the "Lives of the Poets;" Vivian asks if it is possible to get the Life of Clive, or Napoleon, or a copy of Plutarch. Guy shakes his head; says if a Robinson Crusoe will do as well, he has seen one in a very tattered state, but in too great request to be had a bargain.

The party turn into the hut. Miserable animals are bachelors in all countries, but most miserable in Bushland. A man does not know what a helpmate of the soft sex is in the Old World, where women seem a matter of course. But in the Bush a wife is literally bone of your bone, flesh of your flesh, — your better half, your ministering angel, your Eve of the Eden; in short, all that poets have sung, or young orators say at public dinners when called upon to give the toast of "The Ladies." Alas! we are three bachelors, but we are better off than bachelors often are in the Bush; for the wife of the shepherd I took from Cumberland does me and Bolding the honor to live in our hut and make things tidy and comfortable. She has had a couple of children since we have been in the Bush; a wing has been added to the hut for that increase of family. The children, I dare say, one might have thought a sad nuisance in England; but I declare that, surrounded as one is by great bearded men from sunrise to sunset, there is something humanizing, musical, and Christian-like in the very squall of the baby. There it goes, bless it! As for my other

companions from Cumberland, Miles Square, the most aspiring of all, has long left me, and is superintendent to a great sheep-owner some two hundred miles off. The Will-o'-the-Wisp is consigned to the cattle station, where he is Vivian's head man, finding time now and then to indulge his old poaching propensities at the expense of parrots, black cockatoos, pigeons, and kangaroos. The shepherd remains with us, and does not seem, honest fellow, to care to better himself; he has a feeling of clanship which keeps down the ambition common in Australia. And his wife — such a treasure! I assure you, the sight of her smooth, smiling woman's face when we return home at nightfall, and the very flow of her gown as she turns the "dampers"<sup>1</sup> in the ashes and fills the teapot, have in them something holy and angelical. How lucky our Cumberland swain is not jealous! Not that there is any cause, enviable dog though he be; but where Desdemonas are so scarce, if you could but guess how green-eyed their Othellos generally are! Excellent husbands, it is true, — none better; but you had better think twice before you attempt to play the Cassio in Bushland! There, however, she is, dear creature! — rattling among knives and forks, smoothing the table-cloth, setting on the salt beef, and that rare luxury of pickles (the last pot in our store), and the produce of our garden and poultry-yard, which few Bushmen can boast of, and the dampers, and a pot of tea to each banqueter, — no wine, beer, nor spirits; those are only for shearing-time. We have just said grace (a fashion retained from the holy mother-country), when, bless my soul! what a clatter without, what a tramping of feet, what a barking of dogs! Some guests have arrived. They are always welcome in Bushland! Perhaps a cattle-buyer in search of Vivian; perhaps that cursed squatter whose sheep are always migrating to ours. Never mind, — a hearty welcome to all, friend or foe. The door opens; one, two, three strangers. More plates and knives; draw your stools: just in time. First eat, then — what news?

Just as the strangers sit down a voice is heard at the door, —

<sup>1</sup> A damper is a cake of flour baked without yeast, in the ashes.

"You will take particular care of this horse, young man: walk him about a little; wash his back with salt and water. Just unbuckle the saddle-bags; give them to me. Oh! safe enough, I dare say, but papers of consequence. The prosperity of the colony depends on these papers. What would become of you all if any accident happened to them, I shudder to think."

And here, attired in a twill shooting-jacket budding with gilt buttons impressed with a well-remembered device; a cabbage-leaf hat shading a face rarely seen in the Bush; a face smooth as razor could make it; neat, trim, respectable-looking as ever; his arm full of saddle-bags, and his nostrils gently distended, inhaling the steam of the banquet, — walks in — Uncle Jack.

PISISTRATUS (leaping up). — "Is it possible? *You* in Australia! — you in the Bush!"

Uncle Jack, not recognizing Pisistratus in the tall bearded man who is making a plunge at him, recedes in alarm, exclaiming: "Who are you? Never saw you before, sir! I suppose you'll say next that *I owe you something!*"

PISISTRATUS. — "Uncle Jack!"

UNCLE JACK (dropping his saddle-bags). — "Nephew! Heaven be praised! Come to my arms!"

They embrace; mutual introductions to the company, — Mr. Vivian, Mr. Bolding, on the one side; Major MacBlarney, Mr. Bullion, Mr. Emanuel Speck, on the other. Major MacBlarney is a fine, portly man, with a slight Dublin brogue, who squeezes your hand as he would a sponge. Mr. Bullion, reserved and haughty, wears green spectacles, and gives you a forefinger. Mr. Emanuel Speck — unusually smart for the Bush, with a blue-satin stock and one of those blouses common in Germany, with elaborate hems and pockets enough for Briareus to have put all hands into at once; is thin, civil, and stoops — bows, smiles, and sits down to dinner again, with the air of a man accustomed to attend to the main chance.

UNCLE JACK (his mouth full of beef). — "Famous beef! — breed it yourself, eh? Slow work that cattle-feeding! [Empties the rest of the pickle-jar into his plate.] Must

learn to go ahead in the New World, — railway times these ! We can put him up to a thing or to, eh, Bullion ? [Whispering me] Great capitalist that Bullion ! LOOK AT HIM ! ”

MR. BULLION (gravely). — “ A thing or two ! If he has capital, — you have said it, Mr. Tibbets.” (Looks round for the pickles ; the green spectacles remain fixed upon Uncle Jack’s plate.)

UNCLE JACK. — “ All that this colony wants is a few men like us, with capital and spirit. Instead of paying paupers to emigrate, they should pay rich men to come, eh, Speck ? ”

While Uncle Jack turns to Mr. Speck, Mr. Bullion fixes his fork in a pickled onion in Jack’s plate and transfers it to his own, observing, not as incidentally to the onion, but to truth in general : “ A man, gentlemen, in this country, has only to keep his eyes on the look-out and seize on the first advantage ! Resources are incalculable ! ”

Uncle Jack, returning to the plate, and missing the onion, forestalls Mr. Speck in seizing the last potato ; observing also, and in the same philosophical and generalizing spirit as Mr. Bullion : “ The great thing in this country is to be always beforehand. Discovery and invention, promptitude and decision, — that’s your go ! ’Pon my life, one picks up sad vulgar sayings among the natives here ! — ‘ That’s your go ! ’ — shocking ! What would your poor father say ? How is he, — good Austin ? Well ? That’s right ; and my dear sister ? Ah, that damnable Peck ! Still harping on the ‘ Anti-Capitalist,’ eh ? But I’ll make it up to you all now. Gentlemen, charge your glasses, — a bumper-toast.”

MR. SPECK (in an affected tone). — “ I respond to the sentiment in a flowing cup. Glasses are not forthcoming.”

UNCLE JACK. — “ A bumper-toast to the health of the future millionaire whom I present to you in my nephew and sole heir, — Pisistratus Caxton, Esq. Yes, gentlemen, I here publicly announce to you that this gentleman will be the inheritor of all my wealth, — freehold, leasehold, agricultural, and mineral ; and when I am in the cold grave [takes out his pocket-handkerchief], and nothing remains of poor John Tibbets, look upon that gentleman and say, ‘ John Tibbets lives again ! ’ ”



MR. SPECK (chantingly), —

“ ‘ Let the bumper-toast go round.’ ”

GUY BOLDING. — “ Hip, hip, hurrah ! — three times three ! What fun ! ”

Order is restored ; dinner-things are cleared ; each gentleman lights his pipe.

VIVIAN. — “ What news from England ? ”

MR. BULLION. — “ As to the Funds, sir ? ”

MR. SPECK. — “ I suppose you mean rather as to the railways. Great fortunes will be made there, sir ; but still I think that our speculations here will — ”

VIVIAN. — “ I beg pardon for interrupting you, sir, but I thought, in the last papers, that there seemed something hostile in the temper of the French. No chance of a war ? ”

MAJOR MACBLARNEY. — “ Is it the wars you'd be after, young gentleman ? If me interest at the Horse Guards can avail you, bedad ! you'd make a proud man of Major MacBlarney.”

MR. BULLION (authoritatively). — “ No, sir, we won't have a war ; the capitalists of Europe and Australia won't have it. The Rothschilds and a few others that shall be nameless have only got to do *this*, sir [Mr. Bullion buttons up his pockets], — and we'll do it, too ; and then what becomes of your war, sir ? ” (Mr. Bullion snaps his pipe in the vehemence with which he brings his hand on the table, turns round the green spectacles, and takes up Mr. Speck's pipe, which that gentleman had laid aside in an unguarded moment.)

VIVIAN. — “ But the campaign in India ? ”

MAJOR MACBLARNEY. — “ Oh ! and if it's the Ingees you'd — ”

MR. BULLION (refilling Speck's pipe from Guy Bolding's exclusive tobacco-pouch, and interrupting the Major). — “ India, — that's another matter ; I don't object to that. War there, — rather good for the money market than otherwise.”

VIVIAN. — “ What news there, then ? ”

MR. BULLION. — "Don't know; have n't got India stock."

MR. SPECK. — "Nor I either. The day for India is over, — this is our India now." (Misses his tobacco-pipe; sees it in Bullion's mouth, and stares aghast. N. B. The pipe is not a clay dudeen, but a small meerschaum. — irreplaceable in Bushland.)

PISISTRATUS. — "Well, uncle, but I am at a loss to understand what new scheme you have in hand. Something benevolent, I am sure; something for your fellow-creatures, — for philanthropy and mankind?"

MR. BULLION (starting). — "Why, young man, are you as green as all that?"

PISISTRATUS. — "I, sir? No; Heaven forbid! But my —" (Uncle Jack holds up his forefinger imploringly, and spills his tea over the pantaloons of his nephew!)

Pisistratus, wroth at the effect of the tea, and therefore obdurate to the sign of the forefinger, continues rapidly, "But my uncle *is*! Some Grand National-Imperial-Colonial-Anti-Monopoly —"

UNCLE JACK. — "Pooh! pooh! What a droll boy it is!"

MR. BULLION (solemnly). — "With these notions, which not even in jest should be fathered on my respectable and intelligent friend here [Uncle Jack bows], I am afraid you will never get on in the world, Mr. Caxton. I don't think our speculations will suit *you*! It is growing late, gentlemen; we must push on."

UNCLE JACK (jumping up). — "And I have so much to say to the dear boy. Excuse us, — you know the feelings of an uncle." (Takes my arm and leads me out of the hut.)

UNCLE JACK (as soon as we are in the air). — "You'll ruin us — you, me, and your father and mother. Yes! What do you think I work and slave myself for but for you and yours? Ruin us all, I say, if you talk in that way before Bullion! His heart is as hard as the Bank of England's, — and quite right he is too. Fellow-creatures, — stuff! I have renounced that delusion, — the generous follies of my youth! I begin at last to live for myself, — that is, for self and relatives. I shall succeed this time, you'll see!"

PISISTRATUS. — "Indeed, uncle, I hope so sincerely; and, to do you justice, there is always something very clever in your ideas, only they don't —"

UNCLE JACK (interrupting me with a groan). — "The fortunes that other men have gained by my ideas, — shocking to think of! What! and shall I be reproached if I live no longer for such a set of thieving, greedy, ungrateful knaves? No, no! Number One shall be my maxim; and I'll make you a Cæsar, my boy, I will."

Pisistratus, after grateful acknowledgments for all prospective benefits, inquires how long Jack has been in Australia; what brought him into the colony; and what are his present views. Learns, to his astonishment, that Uncle Jack has been four years in the colony; that he sailed the year after Pisistratus, — induced, he says, by that illustrious example and by some mysterious agency or commission, which he will not explain, emanating either from the Colonial Office or an Emigration Company. Uncle Jack has been thriving wonderfully since he abandoned his fellow-creatures. His first speculation, on arriving at the colony, was in buying some houses in Sydney, which (by those fluctuations in prices common to the extremes of the colonial mind, which is one while skipping up the rainbow with Hope, and at another plunging into Acherontian abysses with Despair) he bought excessively cheap, and sold excessively dear. But his grand experiment has been in connection with the infant settlement of Adelaide, of which he considers himself one of the first founders; and as, in the rush of emigration which poured to that favored establishment in the earlier years of its existence, — rolling on its tide all manner of credulous and inexperienced adventurers, — vast sums were lost, so of those sums certain fragments and pickings were easily griped and gathered up by a man of Uncle Jack's readiness and dexterity. Uncle Jack had contrived to procure excellent letters of introduction to the colonial grandees; he got into close connection with some of the principal parties seeking to establish a monopoly of land (which has since been in great measure effected, by raising the price, and excluding the small fry of petty capitalists); and

effectually imposed on them as a man with a vast knowledge of public business, in the confidence of great men at home, considerable influence with the English press, etc. And no discredit to their discernment; for Jack, when he pleased, had a way with him that was almost irresistible. In this manner he contrived to associate himself and his earnings with men really of large capital and long practical experience in the best mode by which that capital might be employed. He was thus admitted into partnership (so far as his means went) with Mr. Bullion, who was one of the largest sheep-owners and land-holders in the colony, — though, having many other nests to feather, that gentleman resided in state at Sydney, and left his runs and stations to the care of overseers and superintendents. But land-jobbing was Jack's special delight; and an ingenious German having lately declared that the neighborhood of Adelaide betrayed the existence of those mineral treasures which have since been brought to day, Mr. Tibbets had persuaded Bullion and the other gentlemen now accompanying him to undertake the land journey from Sydney to Adelaide, privily and quietly, to ascertain the truth of the German's report, which was at present very little believed. If the ground failed of mines, Uncle Jack's account convinced his associates that mines quite as profitable might be found in the pockets of the raw adventurers who were ready to buy one year at the dearest market, and driven to sell the next at the cheapest.

"But," concluded Uncle Jack, with a sly look, and giving me a poke in the ribs, "I've had to do with mines before now, and know what they are. I'll let nobody but you into my pet scheme; you shall go shares if you like. The scheme is as plain as a problem in Euclid: if the German is right, and there are mines, why, the mines will be worked. Then miners must be employed; but miners must eat, drink, and spend their money. The thing is to get *that* money. Do you take?"

PISISTRATUS. — "Not at all!"

UNCLE JACK (majestically). — "A Great Grog and Store Depot! The miners want grog and stores; come to your

depot; you take their money; Q. E. D.! Shares, — eh, you dog? Cribs, as we said at school. Put in a paltry thousand or two, and you shall go halves."

PISISTRATUS (vehemently). — "Not for all the mines of Potosi."

UNCLE JACK (good-humoredly). — "Well, it sha'n't be the worse for you. I sha'n't alter my will, in spite of your want of confidence. Your young friend, — that Mr. Vivian, I think you call him: intelligent-looking fellow; sharper than the other, I guess, — would *he* like a share?"

PISISTRATUS. — "In the grog depot? You had better ask him!"

UNCLE JACK. — "What! you pretend to be aristocratic in the Bush? Too good. Ha, ha — they're calling to me; we must be off."

PISISTRATUS. — "I will ride with you a few miles. What say you, Vivian? and you, Guy?" (As the whole party now joined us.)

Guy prefers basking in the sun and reading the "Lives of the Poets." Vivian assents; we accompany the party till sunset. Major MacBlarney prodigalizes his offers of service in every conceivable department of life, and winds up with an assurance that if we want anything in those departments connected with engineering, — such as mining, mapping, surveying, etc., — he will serve us, bedad, for nothing, or next to it. We suspect Major MacBlarney to be a civil engineer suffering under the innocent hallucination that he has been in the army.

Mr. Speck lets out to me, in a confidential whisper, that Mr. Bullion is monstrous rich, and has made his fortune from small beginnings, by never letting a good thing go. I think of Uncle Jack's pickled onion and Mr. Speck's meerschaum, and perceive, with respectful admiration, that Mr. Bullion acts uniformly on one grand system. Ten minutes afterwards, Mr. Bullion observes, in a tone equally confidential, that Mr. Speck, though so smiling and civil, is as sharp as a needle, and that if I want any shares in the new speculation, or indeed in any other, I had better come at once to Bullion,

who would not deceive me for my weight in gold. "Not," added Bullion, "that I have anything to say against Speck. He is well enough to do in the world, — a warm man, sir; and when a man is really warm, I am the last person to think of his little faults and turn on him the cold shoulder."

"Adieu!" said Uncle Jack, pulling out once more his pocket-handkerchief; "my love to all at home." And sinking his voice into a whisper: "If ever you think better of the Grog and Store Depot, nephew, you 'll find an uncle's heart in this bosom!"



## CHAPTER II.

It was night as Vivian and myself rode slowly home. Night in Australia! How impossible to describe its beauty! Heaven seems, in that new world, so much nearer to earth! Every star stands out so bright and particular as if fresh from the time when the Maker willed it. And the moon like a large silvery sun, — the least object on which it shines so distinct and so still.<sup>1</sup> Now and then a sound breaks the silence, but a sound so much in harmony with the solitude that it only deepens its charms. Hark! the low cry of the night-bird from yonder glen amidst the small gray gleaming rocks. Hark! as night deepens, the bark of the distant watch-dog, or the low, strange howl of his more savage species, from which he defends the fold. Hark! the echo catches the sound, and flings it sportively from hill to hill, — farther and farther and farther down, till all again is hushed, and the flowers hang noiseless over your head as you ride through a grove of the giant gum-trees. Now the air is literally charged with the odors, and the sense of fragrance grows almost painful in its

<sup>1</sup> "I have frequently," says Mr. Wilkinson, in his invaluable work upon South Australia, at once so graphic and so practical, "been out on a journey in such a night, and whilst allowing the horse his own time to walk along the road, have solaced myself by reading in the still moonlight."

pleasure. You quicken your pace, and escape again into the open plains and the full moonlight, and through the slender tea-trees catch the gleam of the river, and in the exquisite fineness of the atmosphere hear the soothing sound of its murmur.

PISISTRATUS. — "And this land has become the heritage of our people! Methinks I see, as I gaze around, the scheme of the All-beneficent Father disentangling itself clear through the troubled history of mankind. How mysteriously, while Europe rears its populations and fulfils its civilizing mission, these realms have been concealed from its eyes, — divulged to us just as civilization needs the solution to its problems; a vent for feverish energies, baffled in the crowd; offering bread to the famished, hope to the desperate; in very truth enabling the 'New World to redress the balance of the Old.' Here, what a Latium for the wandering spirits, —

"'On various seas by various tempests tossed.'

Here, the actual *Æneid* passes before our eyes. From the huts of the exiles scattered over this hardier Italy, who cannot see in the future —

"'A race from whence new Alban sires shall come,  
And the long glories of a future Rome'!"

VIVIAN (mournfully). — "Is it from the outcasts of the work-house, the prison, and the transport-ship that a second Rome is to arise?"

PISISTRATUS. — "There is something in this new soil — in the labor it calls forth, in the hope it inspires, in the sense of property, which I take to be the core of social morals — that expedites the work of redemption with marvellous rapidity. Take them altogether, whatever their origin, or whatever brought them hither, they are a fine, manly, frank-hearted race, these colonists now! — rude, not mean, especially in the Bush; and, I suspect, will ultimately become as gallant and honest a population as that now springing up in South Australia, from which convicts are excluded, — and happily excluded, — for the distinction will sharpen emulation. As to the rest, and in

direct answer to your question, I fancy even the emancipist part of our population every whit as respectable as the mongrel robbers under Romulus."

VIVIAN. — "But were *they* not soldiers, — I mean the first Romans?"

PISISTRATUS. — "My dear cousin, we are in advance of those grim outcasts if we can get lands, houses, and wives (though the last is difficult, and it is well that we have no white Sabines in the neighborhood) without that same soldiering which was the necessity of their existence."

VIVIAN (after a pause). — "I have written to my father, and to yours more fully, — stating in the one letter my wish, in the other trying to explain the feelings from which it springs."

PISISTRATUS. — "Are the letters gone?"

VIVIAN. — "Yes."

PISISTRATUS. — "And you would not show them to me!"

VIVIAN. — "Do not speak so reproachfully. I promised your father to pour out my whole heart to him, whenever it was troubled and at strife. I promise you now that I will go by his advice."

PISISTRATUS (disconsolately). — "What is there in this military life for which you yearn that can yield you more food for healthful excitement and stirring adventure than your present pursuits afford?"

VIVIAN. — "Distinction! You do not see the difference between us. You have but a fortune to make, — I have a name to redeem; you look calmly on to the future, — I have a dark blot to erase from the past."

PISISTRATUS (soothingly). — "It is erased. Five years of no weak bewailings, but of manly reform, steadfast industry, conduct so blameless that even Guy (whom I look upon as the incarnation of blunt English honesty) half doubts whether you are *'cute* enough for 'a station;' a character already so high that I long for the hour when you will again take your father's spotless name, and give me the pride to own our kinship to the world, — all this surely redeems the errors arising from an uneducated childhood and a wandering youth."



VIVIAN (leaning over his horse, and putting his hand on my shoulder). — “My dear friend, what do I owe you!” Then recovering his emotion, and pushing on at a quicker pace, while he continues to speak, “But can you not see that, just in proportion as my comprehension of right would become clear and strong, so my conscience would become also more sensitive and reproachful; and the better I understand my gallant father, the more I must desire to be as he would have had his son. Do you think it would content him, could he see me branding cattle and bargaining with bullock-drivers? Was it not the strongest wish of his heart that I should adopt his own career? Have I not heard you say that he would have had you too a soldier, but for your mother? I have no mother! If I made thousands, and tens of thousands, by this ignoble calling, would they give my father half the pleasure that he would feel at seeing my name honorably mentioned in a despatch? No, no! You have banished the gypsy blood, and now the soldier’s breaks out! Oh, for one glorious day in which I may clear my way into fair repute, as our fathers before us! — when tears of proud joy may flow from those eyes that have wept such hot drops at my shame; when *she*, too, in her high station beside that sleek lord, may say, ‘His heart was not so vile, after all!’ Don’t argue with me, — it is in vain! Pray, rather, that I may have leave to work out my own way; for I tell you that if condemned to stay here, I may not murmur aloud, — I may go through this round of low duties as the brute turns the wheel of a mill; but my heart will prey on itself, and you shall soon write on my gravestone the epitaph of the poor poet you told us of whose true disease was the thirst of glory, — ‘Here lies one whose name was writ in water.’”

I had no answer; that contagious ambition made my own veins run more warmly, and my own heart beat with a louder tumult. Amidst the pastoral scenes, and under the tranquil moonlight of the New, the Old World, even in me, rude Bushman, claimed for a while its son. But as we rode on, the air, so inexpressibly buoyant, yet soothing as an anodyne, restored me to peaceful Nature. Now the flocks, in their snowy clus-

ters, were seen sleeping under the stars ; hark ! the welcome of the watch-dogs ; see the light gleaming far from the chink of the door ! And, pausing, I said aloud : " No, there is more glory in laying these rough foundations of a mighty state, though no trumpets resound with your victory, though no laurels shall shadow your tomb, than in forcing the onward progress of your race over burning cities and hecatombs of men ! " I looked round for Vivian's answer ; but ere I spoke he had spurred from my side, and I saw the wild dogs slinking back from the hoofs of his horse as he rode at speed on the sward through the moonlight.



### CHAPTER III.

THE weeks and the months rolled on, and the replies to Vivian's letters came at last ; I foreboded too well their purport. I knew that my father could not set himself in opposition to the deliberate and cherished desire of a man who had now arrived at the full strength of his understanding, and must be left at liberty to make his own election of the paths of life. Long after that date I saw Vivian's letter to my father ; and even his conversation had scarcely prepared me for the pathos of that confession of a mind remarkable alike for its strength and its weakness. If born in the age, or submitted to the influences, of religious enthusiasm, here was a nature that, awakening from sin, could not have been contented with the sober duties of mediocre goodness ; that would have plunged into the fiery depths of monkish fanaticism, wrestled with the fiend in the hermitage, or marched barefoot on the infidel with a sackcloth for armor, — the cross for a sword. Now, the impatient desire for redemption took a more mundane direction, but with something that seemed almost spiritual in its fervor. And this enthusiasm flowed through strata of such

profound melancholy! Deny it a vent, and it might sicken into lethargy or fret itself into madness, — give it the vent, and it might vivify and fertilize as it swept along.

My father's reply to this letter was what might be expected. It gently reinforced the old lessons in the distinctions between aspirations towards the perfecting ourselves, — aspirations that are never in vain, — and the morbid passion for applause from others, which shifts conscience from our own bosoms to the confused Babel of the crowd and calls it "fame." But my father in his counsels did not seek to oppose a mind so obstinately bent upon a single course, — he sought rather to guide and strengthen it in the way it should go. The seas of human life are wide. Wisdom may suggest the voyage, but it must first look to the condition of the ship and the nature of the merchandise to exchange. Not every vessel that sails from Tarshish can bring back the gold of Ophir; but shall it therefore rot in the harbor? No; give its sails to the wind!

But I had expected that Roland's letter to his son would have been full of joy and exultation, — joy there was none in it, yet exultation there might be, though serious, grave, and subdued. In the proud assent that the old soldier gave to his son's wish, in his entire comprehension of motives so akin to his own nature, there was yet a visible sorrow; it seemed even as if he constrained himself to the assent he gave. Not till I had read it again and again could I divine Roland's feelings while he wrote. At this distance of time I comprehend them well. Had he sent from his side, into noble warfare, some boy fresh to life, new to sin, with an enthusiasm pure and single-hearted as his own young chivalrous ardor, then, with all a soldier's joy, he had yielded a cheerful tribute to the hosts of England. But here he recognized, though perhaps dimly, not the frank, military fervor, but the stern desire of expiation; and in that thought he admitted forebodings that would have been otherwise rejected, so that at the close of the letter it seemed, not the fiery, war-seasoned Roland that wrote, but rather some timid, anxious mother. Warnings and entreaties and cautions not to be rash, and assurances that the best soldiers were ever the most prudent, — were these the counsels

of the fierce veteran who at the head of the forlorn hope had mounted the wall at —, his sword between his teeth?

But whatever his presentiments, Roland had yielded at once to his son's prayer, hastened to London at the receipt of his letter, obtained a commission in a regiment now in active service in India; and that commission was made out in his son's name. The commission, with an order to join the regiment as soon as possible, accompanied the letter.

And Vivian, pointing to the name addressed to him, said, "Now indeed I may resume this name, and next to Heaven will I hold it sacred! It shall guide me to glory in life, or my father shall read it, without shame, on my tomb!" I see him before me as he stood then, — his form erect, his dark eyes solemn in their light, a serenity in his smile, a grandeur on his brow, that I had never marked till then! Was that the same man I had recoiled from as the sneering cynic, shuddered at as the audacious traitor, or wept over as the cowering outcast? How little the nobleness of aspect depends on symmetry of feature, or the mere proportions of form! What dignity robes the man who is filled with a lofty thought!

---

#### CHAPTER IV.

He is gone; he has left a void in my existence. I had grown to love him so well; I had been so proud when men praised him. My love was a sort of self-love, — I had looked upon him in part as the work of my own hands. I am a long time ere I can settle back, with good heart, to my pastoral life. Before my cousin went, we cast up our gains and settled our shares. When he resigned the allowance which Roland had made him, his father secretly gave to me, for his use, a sum equal to that which I and Guy Bolding brought into the common stock. Roland had raised a sum upon mort-

gage; and while the interest was a trivial deduction from his income, compared to the former allowance, the capital was much more useful to his son than a mere yearly payment could have been. Thus, between us, we had a considerable sum for Australian settlers, — £4,500. For the first two years we made nothing, — indeed, great part of the first year was spent in learning our art, at the station of an old settler. But at the end of the third year, our flocks having then become very considerable, we cleared a return beyond my most sanguine expectations. And when my cousin left, just in the sixth year of exile, our shares amounted to £4,000 each, exclusive of the value of the two stations. My cousin had at first wished that I should forward his share to his father; but he soon saw that Roland would never take it, and it was finally agreed that it should rest in my hands, for me to manage for him, send him out an interest at five per cent, and devote the surplus profits to the increase of his capital. I had now, therefore, the control of £12,000, and we might consider ourselves very respectable capitalists. I kept on the cattle station, by the aid of the Will-o'-the-Wisp, for about two years after Vivian's departure (we had then had it altogether for five). At the end of that time, I sold it and the stock to great advantage. And the sheep — for the "brand" of which I had a high reputation — having wonderfully prospered in the mean while, I thought we might safely extend our speculations into new ventures. Glad, too, of a change of scene, I left Bolding in charge of the flocks and bent my course to Adelaide, for the fame of that new settlement had already disturbed the peace of the Bush. I found Uncle Jack residing near Adelaide in a very handsome villa, with all the signs and appurtenances of colonial opulence; and report, perhaps, did not exaggerate the gains he had made, — so many strings to his bow, and each arrow, this time, seemed to have gone straight to the white of the butts. I now thought I had acquired knowledge and caution sufficient to avail myself of Uncle Jack's ideas, without ruining myself by following them out in his company; and I saw a kind of retributive justice in making his brain minister to the fortunes which his ideality

and constructiveness, according to Squills, had served so notably to impoverish. I must here gratefully acknowledge that I owed much to this irregular genius. The investigation of the supposed mines had proved unsatisfactory to Mr. Bullion, and they were not fairly discovered till a few years after. But Jack had convinced himself of their existence, and purchased, on his own account, "for an old song," some barren land which he was persuaded would prove to him a Golconda, one day or other, under the euphonious title (which, indeed, it ultimately established) of the "Tibbets' Wheal." The suspension of the mines, however, fortunately suspended the existence of the Grog and Store Depot, and Uncle Jack was now assisting in the foundation of Port Philip. Profiting by his advice, I adventured in that new settlement some timid and wary purchases, which I resold to considerable advantage. Meanwhile I must not omit to state briefly what, since my departure from England, had been the ministerial career of Trevanion.

That refining fastidiousness, that scrupulosity of political conscience, which had characterized him as an independent member, and often served, in the opinion both of friend and of foe, to give the attribute of *general* impracticability to a mind that, in all *details*, was so essentially and laboriously practical, might perhaps have founded Trevanion's reputation as a minister if he could have been a minister without colleagues, — if, standing alone, and from the necessary height, he could have placed, clear and single, before the world, his exquisite honesty of purpose and the width of a statesmanship marvelously accomplished and comprehensive. But Trevanion could not amalgamate with others, nor subscribe to the discipline of a cabinet in which he was not the chief, especially in a policy which must have been thoroughly abhorrent to such a nature, — a policy that, of late years, has distinguished not one faction alone, but has seemed so forced upon the more eminent political leaders on either side that they who take the more charitable view of things may perhaps hold it to arise from the necessity of the age, fostered by the temper of the public: I mean the policy of *Expediency*. Certainly not in this book

will I introduce the angry elements of party politics; and how should I know much about them? All that I have to say is that, right or wrong, such a policy must have been at war, every moment, with each principle of Trevanion's statesmanship, and fretted each fibre of his moral constitution. The aristocratic combinations which his alliance with the Castleton interest had brought to his aid served perhaps to fortify his position in the Cabinet; yet aristocratic combinations were of small avail against what seemed the atmospherical epidemic of the age. I could see how his situation had preyed on his mind when I read a paragraph in the newspapers, "that it was reported, on good authority, that Mr. Trevanion had tendered his resignation, but had been prevailed upon to withdraw it, as his retirement at that moment would break up the government." Some months afterwards came another paragraph, to the effect "that Mr. Trevanion was taken suddenly ill, and that it was feared his illness was of a nature to preclude his resuming his official labors." Then Parliament broke up. Before it met again, Mr. Trevanion was gazetted as Earl of Ulverstone, — a title that had been once in his family, — and had left the Administration, unable to encounter the fatigues of office. To an ordinary man the elevation to an earldom, passing over the lesser honors in the peerage, would have seemed no mean close to a political career; but I felt what profound despair of striving against circumstance for utility — what entanglements with his colleagues, whom he could neither conscientiously support, nor, according to his high old-fashioned notions of party honor and etiquette, energetically oppose — had driven him to abandon that stormy scene in which his existence had been passed. The House of Lords, to that active intellect, was as the retirement of some warrior of old into the cloisters of a convent. The gazette that chronicled the earldom of Ulverstone was the proclamation that Albert Trevanion lived no more for the world of public men. And, indeed, from that date his career vanished out of sight. Trevanion died, — the Earl of Ulverstone made no sign.

I had hitherto written but twice to Lady Ellinor during my exile, — once upon the marriage of Fanny with Lord Castle-

ton, which took place about six months after I sailed from England, and again when thanking her husband for some rare animals, equine, pastoral, and bovine, which he had sent as presents to Bolding and myself. I wrote again after Trevanion's elevation to the peerage, and received, in due time, a reply confirming all my impressions; for it was full of bitterness and gall, accusations of the world, fears for the country, — Richelieu himself could not have taken a gloomier view of things when his levees were deserted and his power seemed annihilated before the "Day of Dupes." Only one gleam of comfort appeared to visit Lady Ulverstone's breast, and thence to settle prospectively over the future of the world, — a second son had been born to Lord Castleton; to that son would descend the estates of Ulverstone and the representation of that line distinguished by Trevanion and enriched by Trevanion's wife. Never was there a child of such promise! Not Virgil himself, when he called on the Sicilian Muses to celebrate the advent of a son to Pollio, ever sounded a loftier strain. Here was one, now, perchance, engaged on words of two syllables, called —

"By laboring Nature to sustain  
The nodding frame of heaven and earth and main,  
See to their base restored, earth, sea, and air,  
And joyful ages from behind in crowding ranks appear!"

Happy dream which Heaven sends to grandparents, — rebaptism of Hope in the font whose drops sprinkle the grand-child!

Time flies on; affairs continue to prosper. I am just leaving the bank at Adelaide with a satisfied air when I am stopped in the street by bowing acquaintances who never shook me by the hand before. They shake me by the hand now, and cry, "I wish you joy, sir. That brave fellow, your namesake, is of course your near relation."

"What do you mean?"

"Have you not seen the papers? Here they are."

**"GALLANT CONDUCT OF ENSIGN DE CAXTON! PROMOTED  
TO A LIEUTENANCY ON THE FIELD!"**



I wipe my eyes, and cry: "Thank Heaven,—it is my cousin!" Then new hand-shakings, new groups gather round. I feel taller by the head than I was before! We grumbling English, always quarrelling with each other,—the world not wide enough to hold us; and yet, when in the far land some bold deed is done by a countryman, how we feel that we are brothers; how our hearts warm to each other! What a letter I wrote home, and how joyously I went back to the Bush! The Will-o'-the-Wisp has attained to a cattle-station of his own. I go fifty miles out of my way to tell him the news and give him the newspaper; for he knows now that his old master, Vivian, is a Cumberland man,—a Caxton. Poor Will-o'-the-Wisp! The tea that night tasted uncommonly like whiskey-punch! Father Mathew, forgive us; but if you had been a Cumberland man, and heard the Will-o'-the-Wisp roaring out, "Blue Bonnets over the Borders," I think your tea, too, would not have come out of the—caddy!

---

## CHAPTER V.

A GREAT change has occurred in our household. Guy's father is dead,—his latter years cheered by the accounts of his son's steadiness and prosperity, and by the touching proofs thereof which Guy has exhibited; for he insisted on repaying to his father the old college debts and the advance of the £1,500, begging that the money might go towards his sister's portion. Now, after the old gentleman's death, the sister resolved to come out and live with her dear brother Guy. Another wing is built to the hut. Ambitious plans for a new stone house, to be commenced the following year, are entertained; and Guy has brought back from Adelaide not only a sister, but, to my utter astonishment, a wife, in the shape of a fair friend by whom the sister is accompanied.

The young lady did quite right to come to Australia if she wanted to be married. She was very pretty, and all the beaux in Adelaide were round her in a moment. Guy was in love the first day, in a rage with thirty rivals the next, in despair the third, put the question the fourth, and before the fifteenth was a married man, hastening back with a treasure, of which he fancied all the world was conspiring to rob him. His sister was quite as pretty as her friend, and she, too, had offers enough the moment she landed, — only she was romantic and fastidious; and I fancy Guy told her that "I was just made for her."

However, charming though she be, — with pretty blue eyes and her brother's frank smile, — I am not enchanted. I fancy she lost all chance of my heart by stepping across the yard in a pair of silk shoes. If I were to live in the Bush, give me a wife as a companion who can ride well, leap over a ditch, walk beside me when I go forth, gun in hand, for a shot at the kangaroos. But I dare not go on with the list of a Bush husband's requisites. This change, however, serves, for various reasons, to quicken my desire of return. Ten years have now elapsed, and I have already obtained a much larger fortune than I had calculated to make. Sorely to Guy's honest grief, I therefore wound up our affairs and dissolved partnership; for he had decided to pass his life in the colony, — and with his pretty wife, who has grown very fond of him, I don't wonder at it. Guy takes my share of the station and stock off my hands; and, all accounts squared between us, I bid farewell to the Bush. Despite all the motives that drew my heart homeward, it was not without participation in the sorrow of my old companions that I took leave of those I might never see again on this side the grave. The meanest man in my employ had grown a friend; and when those hard hands grasped mine, and from many a breast that once had waged fierce war with the world came the soft blessing to the Homeward-bound, — with a tender thought for the Old England that had been but a harsh stepmother to them, — I felt a choking sensation which I suspect is little known to the friendships of Mayfair and St. James's. I was forced to get

off with a few broken words, when I had meant to part with a long speech, — perhaps the broken words pleased the audience better. Spurring away, I gained a little eminence and looked back. There were the poor faithful fellows gathered in a ring, watching me, their hats off, their hands shading their eyes from the sun. And Guy had thrown himself on the ground, and I heard his loud sobs distinctly. His wife was leaning over his shoulder, trying to soothe. Forgive him, fair help-mate; you will be all the world to him — to-morrow! And the blue-eyed sister, where was she? Had she no tears for the rough friend who laughed at the silk shoes, and taught her how to hold the reins and never fear that the old pony would run away with her? What matter? If the tears were shed, they were hidden tears. No shame in them, fair Ellen! Since then thou hast wept happy tears over thy first-born, — those tears have long ago washed away all bitterness in the innocent memories of a girl's first fancy.



## CHAPTER VI.

DATED FROM ADELAIDE.

IMAGINE my wonder! Uncle Jack has just been with me, and — But hear the dialogue.

UNCLE JACK. — "So you are positively going back to that smoky, fusty Old England, just when you are on your high road to a plum, — a plum, sir, at least! They all say there is not a more rising young man in the colony. I think Bullion would take you into partnership. What are you in such a hurry for?"

PISISTRATUS. — "To see my father and mother and Uncle Roland, and —" (was about to name some one else, but stops). "You see, my dear uncle, I came out solely with the idea of

repairing my father's losses in that unfortunate speculation of 'The Capitalist'!"

UNCLE JACK (coughs and ejaculates). — "That villain Peck!"

PISISTRATUS. — "And to have a few thousands to invest in poor Roland's acres. The object is achieved: why should I stay?"

UNCLE JACK. — "A few paltry thousands, when in twenty years more, at the farthest, you would wallow in gold!"

PISISTRATUS. — "A man learns in the Bush how happy life can be with plenty of employment and very little money. I shall practise that lesson in England."

UNCLE JACK. — "Your mind's made up?"

PISISTRATUS. — "And my place in the ship taken."

UNCLE JACK. — "Then there's no more to be said." (Hums, haws, and examines his nails, — filbert-nails, not a speck on them. Then suddenly, and jerking up his head) "That 'Capitalist'! it has been on my conscience, nephew, ever since; and, somehow or other, since I have abandoned the cause of my fellow-creatures, I think I have cared more for my relations."

PISISTRATUS (smiling as he remembers his father's shrewd predictions thereon). — "Naturally, my dear uncle; any child who has thrown a stone into a pond knows that a circle disappears as it widens."

UNCLE JACK. — "Very true, — I shall make a note of that, applicable to my next speech in defence of what they call the 'land monopoly.' Thank you, — stone, circle! [Jots down notes in his pocket-book.] But to return to the point: I am well off now, I have neither wife nor child, and I feel that I ought to bear my share in your father's loss, — it was our joint speculation. And your father — good, dear Austin! — paid my debts into the bargain. And how cheering the punch was that night, when your mother wanted to scold poor Jack! And the £300 Austin lent me when I left him: nephew, that was the remaking of me, — the acorn of the oak I have planted. So here they are [added Uncle Jack, with a heroic effort, and he extracted from the pocket-book bills for a

sum between three and four thousand pounds]. There, it is done; and I shall sleep better for it!" With that Uncle Jack got up, and bolted out of the room.

Ought I to take the money? Why, I think yes, — it is but fair. Jack must be really rich, and can well spare the money; besides, if he wants it again, I know my father will let him have it. And, indeed, Jack caused the loss of the whole sum lost on "The Capitalist," etc.: and this is not quite the half of what my father paid away. But is it not fine in Uncle Jack? Well, my father was quite right in his milder estimate of Jack's scalene conformation, and it is hard to judge of a man when he is needy and down in the world. When one grafts one's ideas on one's neighbor's money, they are certainly not so grand as when they spring from one's own.

UNCLE JACK (popping his head into the room). — "And, you see, you can double that money if you will just leave it in my hands for a couple of years, — you have no notion what I shall make of the Tibbets' Wheal! Did I tell you? The German was quite right; I have been offered already seven times the sum which I gave for the land. But I am now looking out for a company: let me put you down for shares to the amount at least of those trumpery bills. Cent per cent, — I guarantee cent per cent!" And Uncle Jack stretches out those famous smooth hands of his, with a tremulous motion of the ten eloquent fingers.

PISISTRATUS. — "Ah! my dear uncle, if you repent —"

UNCLE JACK. — "Repent, when I offer you cent per cent, on my personal guarantee!"

PISISTRATUS (carefully putting the bills into his breast coat-pocket). — "Then if you don't repent, my dear uncle, allow me to shake you by the hand and say that I will not consent to lessen my esteem and admiration for the high principle which prompts this restitution, by confounding it with trading associations of loans, interests, and copper-mines. And, you see, since this sum is paid to my father, I have no right to invest it without his permission."

UNCLE JACK (with emotion). — "'Esteem, admiration, high principle!' — these are pleasant words from you, nephew.

[Then, shaking his head, and smiling] You sly dog! you are quite right; get the bills cashed at once. And hark ye, sir, just keep out of my way, will you? And don't let me coax from you a farthing." Uncle Jack slams the door and rushes out. Pisistratus draws the bills warily from his pocket, half suspecting they must already have turned into withered leaves, like fairy money; slowly convinces himself that the bills are good bills; and by lively gestures testifies his delight and astonishment. Scene changes.

## PART XVIII.

## CHAPTER I.

ADIEU, thou beautiful land, Canaan of the exiles, and Ararat to many a shattered ark! Fair cradle of a race for whom the unbounded heritage of a future that no sage can conjecture, no prophet divine, lies afar in the golden promise-light of Time!—destined, perchance, from the sins and sorrows of a civilization struggling with its own elements of decay, to renew the youth of the world, and transmit the great soul of England through the cycles of Infinite Change. All climates that can best ripen the products of earth or form into various character and temper the different families of man “rain influences” from the heaven that smiles so benignly on those who had once shrunk, ragged, from the wind, or scowled on the thankless sun. Here, the hard air of the chill Mother Isle,—there, the mild warmth of Italian autumns or the breathless glow of the tropics. And with the beams of every climate, glides subtle HOPE. Of her there, it may be said, as of Light itself, in those exquisite lines of a neglected poet, —

“Through the soft ways of heaven and air and sea,  
Which open all their pores to thee,  
Like a clear river thou dost glide.

. . . . .  
All the world's bravery that delights our eyes  
Is but thy several liveries;  
Thou the rich dye on them bestowest;  
Thy nimble pencil paints the landscape as thou goest.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cowley: Ode to Light.

Adieu, my kind nurse and sweet foster-mother, — a long and a last adieu! Never had I left thee but for that louder voice of Nature which calls the child to the parent, and woos us from the labors we love the best by the chime in the sabbath-bells of Home.

No one can tell how dear the memory of that wild Bush life becomes to him who has tried it with a *fitting spirit*. How often it haunts him in the commonplace of more civilized scenes! Its dangers, its risks, its sense of animal health, its bursts of adventure, its intervals of careless repose, — the fierce gallop through a very sea of wide, rolling plains; the still saunter, at night, through woods never changing their leaves, with the moon, clear as sunshine, stealing slant through their clusters of flowers. With what an effort we reconcile ourselves to the trite cares and vexed pleasures, "the quotidian ague of frigid impertinences," to which we return! How strong and black stands my pencil-mark in this passage of the poet from whom I have just quoted before! —

"We are here among the vast and noble scenes of Nature, — we are there among the pitiful shifts of policy; we walk here in the light and open ways of the Divine Bounty, — we grope there in the dark and confused labyrinth of human malice."<sup>1</sup>

But I weary you, reader. The New World vanishes, — now a line, now a speck; let us turn away, with the face to the Old.

Amongst my fellow-passengers how many there are returning home disgusted, disappointed, impoverished, ruined, throwing themselves again on those unsuspecting poor friends who thought they had done with the luckless good-for-nothings forever. For don't let me deceive thee, reader, into supposing that every adventurer to Australia has the luck of Pisistratus. Indeed, though the poor laborer, and especially the poor operative from London and the great trading towns (who has generally more of the quick knack of learning, — the *adaptable faculty*, — required in a new colony, than the simple agricultural laborer), are pretty sure to succeed, the class to which I belong is one in which failures are numerous and success the

<sup>1</sup> Cowley on *Town and Country*. (Discourse on Agriculture.)



exception, — I mean young men with scholastic education and the habits of gentlemen; with small capital and sanguine hopes. But this, in ninety-nine times out of a hundred, is not the fault of the colony, but of the emigrants. It requires not so much intellect as a peculiar turn of intellect, and a fortunate combination of physical qualities, easy temper, and quick mother-wit, to make a small capitalist a prosperous Bushman.<sup>1</sup> And if you could see the sharks that swim round a man just dropped at Adelaide or Sydney, with one or two thousand pounds in his pocket! Hurry out of the towns as fast as you can, my young emigrant; turn a deaf ear, for the present at least, to all jobbers and speculators; make friends with some practised old Bushman; spend several months at his station before you hazard your capital; take with you a temper to bear everything and sigh for nothing; put your whole heart in what you are about; never call upon Hercules when your cart sticks in the rut, — and whether you feed sheep or breed cattle, your success is but a question of time.

But whatever I owed to Nature, I owed also something to Fortune. I bought my sheep at little more than 7s. each. When I left, none were worth less than 15s., and the fat sheep were worth £1.<sup>2</sup> I had an excellent shepherd, and my whole care,

<sup>1</sup> How true are the following remarks: —

Action is the first great requisite of a colonist (that is, a pastoral or agricultural settler). With a young man, the tone of his mind is more important than his previous pursuits. I have known men of an active, energetic, contented disposition, with a good flow of animal spirits, who had been bred in luxury and refinement, succeed better than men bred as farmers who were always hankering after bread and beer, and market ordinaries of Old England. . . . To be dreaming when you should be looking after your cattle is a terrible drawback. . . . There are certain persons who, too lazy and too extravagant to succeed in Europe, sail for Australia under the idea that fortunes are to be made there by a sort of legerdemain, spend or lose their capital in a very short space of time, and return to England to abuse the place, the people, and everything connected with colonization. — SIDNEY: *Australian Handbook* (admirable for its wisdom and compactness).

<sup>2</sup> Lest this seem an exaggeration, I venture to annex an extract from a manuscript letter to the author from Mr. George Blakeston Wilkinson, author of "South Australia" —

"I will instance the case of one person who had been a farmer in England, and emigrated with about £2,000 about seven years since. On his arrival he

night and day, was the improvement of the flock. I was fortunate, too, in entering Australia before the system misnamed "The Wakefield"<sup>1</sup> had diminished the supply of labor and raised the price of land. When the change came (like most of those with large allotments and surplus capital), it greatly increased the value of my own property, though at the cost of a terrible blow on the general interests of the colony. I was lucky, too, in the additional venture of a cattle-station, and in the breed of horses and herds, which, in the five years devoted to that branch establishment, trebled the sum invested therein, exclusive of the advantageous sale of the station.<sup>2</sup> I was lucky, also, as I have stated, in the purchase and resale of lands, at Uncle Jack's recommendation. And, lastly, I left in time, and escaped a very disastrous crisis in colonial affairs, which I take the liberty of attributing entirely to the mis-

found that the prices of sheep had fallen from about 30s. to 5s. or 6s. per head, and he bought some well-bred flocks at these prices. He was fortunate in obtaining a good and extensive run, and he devoted the whole of his time to improving his flocks, and encouraged his shepherds by rewards; so that in about four years his original number of sheep had increased from twenty-five hundred (which cost him £700) to seven thousand; and the breed and wool were also so much improved that he could obtain £1 per head for two thousand fat sheep, and 15s. per head for the other five thousand, — and this at a time when the general price of sheep was from 10s. to 16s. This alone increased his original capital, invested in sheep, from £700 to £5,700. The profits from the wool paid the whole of his expenses and wages for his men."

<sup>1</sup> I felt sure from the first that the system called "The Wakefield" could never fairly represent the ideas of Mr. Wakefield himself, whose singular breadth of understanding and various knowledge of mankind belied the notion that fathered on him the clumsy execution of a theory wholly inapplicable to a social state like Australia. I am glad to see that he has vindicated himself from the discreditable paternity. But I grieve to find that he still clings to one cardinal error of the system, in the discouragement of small holdings, and that he evades, more ingeniously than ingenuously, the important question: "What should be the minimum price of land?"

<sup>2</sup> The profits of cattle-farming are smaller than those of the sheep-owner (if the latter have good luck; for much depends upon that), but cattle-farming is much more safe as a speculation, and less care, knowledge, and management are required. £2,000 laid out on seven hundred head of cattle, if good runs be procured, might increase the capital in five years from £2,000 to £8,000, besides enabling the owner to maintain himself, pay wages, etc.

— *Manuscript letter from G. B. Wilkinson.*

chievous crotchets of theorists at home who want to set all clocks by Greenwich time, forgetting that it is morning in one part of the world at the time they are tolling the curfew in the other.

---

## CHAPTER II.

LONDON once more ! How strange, lone, and savage I feel in the streets ! I am ashamed to have so much health and strength when I look at those slim forms, stooping backs, and pale faces. I pick my way through the crowd with the merciful timidity of a good-natured giant. I am afraid of jostling against a man, for fear the collision should kill him. I get out of the way of a thread-paper clerk, and 't is a wonder I am not run over by the omnibuses, — I feel as if I could run over them ! I perceive, too, that there is something outlandish, peregrinate, and lawless about me. Beau Brummel would certainly have denied me all pretension to the simple air of a gentleman, for every third passenger turns back to look at me. I retreat to my hotel ; send for boot-maker, hatter, tailor, and hair-cutter. I humanize myself from head to foot. Even Ulysses is obliged to have recourse to the arts of Minerva, and, to speak unmetaphorically, "smartens himself up," before the faithful Penelope condescends to acknowledge him.

The artificers promise all despatch. Meanwhile I hasten to re-make acquaintance with my mother-country over files of the "Times," "Post," "Chronicle," and "Herald." Nothing comes amiss to me but articles on Australia ; from those I turn aside with the true pshaw supercilious of your practical man.

No more are leaders filled with praise and blame of Trevanion. "Percy's spur is cold." Lord Ulverstone figures only in the "Court Circular," or "Fashionable Movements." Lord Ulverstone entertains a royal duke at dinner, or dines in turn with a royal duke, or has come to town, or gone out

of it. At most (faint Platonic reminiscence of the former life), Lord Ulverstone says in the House of Lords a few words on some question, not a party one, and on which (though affecting perhaps the interests of some few thousands, or millions, as the case may be) men speak without "hears," and are inaudible in the gallery; or Lord Ulverstone takes the chair at an agricultural meeting, or returns thanks when his health is drunk at a dinner at Guildhall. But the daughter rises as the father sets, though over a very different kind of world.

"First ball of the season at Castleton House,"—long description of the rooms and the company; above all, of the hostess. Lines on the Marchioness of Castleton's picture in the "Book of Beauty," by the Hon. Fitzroy Fiddledum, beginning with "Art thou an angel from," etc.: a paragraph that pleased me more, on "Lady Castleton's Infant School at Raby Park;" then again, "Lady Castleton, the new patroness at Almack's;" a criticism, more rapturous than ever gladdened living poet, on Lady Castleton's superb diamond stomacher, just reset by Storr & Mortimer; Westmacott's bust of Lady Castleton; Landseer's picture of Lady Castleton and her children in the costume of the olden time. Not a month in that long file of the "Morning Post" but what Lady Castleton shone forth from the rest of womankind,—

"Velut inter ignes

Luna minores."

The blood mounted to my cheek. Was it to this splendid constellation in the patrician heaven that my obscure, portionless youth had dared to lift its presumptuous eyes? But what is this? "Indian Intelligence: Skilful retreat of the Sepoys under Captain de Caxton"! A captain already! What is the date of the newspaper!—three months ago. The leading article quotes the name with high praise. Is there no leaven of envy amidst the joy at my heart? How obscure has been my career,—how laurelless my poor battle with adverse fortune! Fie, Pisistratus! I am ashamed of thee. Has this accursed Old World, with its feverish rivalries, dis-

eased thee already ? Get thee home, quick, to the arms of thy mother, the embrace of thy father ; hear Roland's low blessing that thou hast helped to minister to the very fame of that son. If thou wilt have ambition, take it, — not soiled and foul with the mire of London. Let it spring fresh and hardy in the calm air of wisdom, and fed, as with dews, by the loving charities of Home.

---

## CHAPTER III.

It was at sunset that I stole through the ruined court-yard, having left my chaise at the foot of the hill below. Though they whom I came to seek knew that I had arrived in England, they did not, from my letter, expect me till the next day. I had stolen a march upon them ; and now, in spite of all the impatience which had urged me thither, I was afraid to enter, — afraid to see the change more than ten years had made in those forms for which, in my memory, Time had stood still. And Roland had, even when we parted, grown old before his time. Then my father was in the meridian of life, now he had approached to the decline. And my mother, whom I remembered so fair, as if the freshness of her own heart had preserved the soft bloom to the cheek, — I could not bear to think that she was no longer young. Blanche, too, whom I had left a child, — Blanche, my constant correspondent during those long years of exile, in letters crossed and recrossed, with all the small details that make the eloquence of letter-writing, so that in those epistles I had seen her mind gradually grow up in harmony with the very characters, at first vague and infantine, then somewhat stiff with the first graces of running-hand, then dashing off free and facile ; and for the last year before I left, so formed yet so airy, so regular yet so unconscious of effort, though in truth, as the calligraphy had become

thus matured, I had been half vexed and half pleased to perceive a certain reserve creeping over the style, — wishes for my return less expressed from herself than as messages from others, words of the old child-like familiarity repressed, and “Dearest Sisty” abandoned for the cold form of “Dear Cousin.” Those letters, coming to me in a spot where maiden and love had been as myths of the bygone, phantasms and *eidola* only vouchsafed to the visions of fancy, had by little and little crept into secret corners of my heart; and out of the wrecks of a former romance, solitude and revery had gone far to build up the fairy domes of a romance yet to come. My mother’s letters had never omitted to make mention of Blanche, — of her forethought and tender activity, of her warm heart and sweet temper, — and in many a little home picture presented her image where I would fain have placed it, not “crystal seeing,” but joining my mother in charitable visits to the village, instructing the young and tending on the old, or teaching herself to illuminate, from an old missal in my father’s collection, that she might surprise my uncle with a new genealogical table, with all shields and quarterings, blazoned *or*, *sable*, and *argent*; or flitting round my father where he sat, and watching when he looked round for some book he was too lazy to rise for. Blanche had made a new catalogue and got it by heart, and knew at once from what corner of the Heraclea to summon the ghost. On all these little traits had my mother been eulogistically minute; but somehow or other she had never said, at least for the last two years, whether Blanche was pretty or plain. That was a sad omission. I had longed just to ask that simple question, or to imply it delicately and diplomatically; but, I know not why, I never dared, — for Blanche would have been sure to have read the letter; and what business was it of mine? And if she *was* ugly, what question more awkward both to put and to answer? Now, in childhood Blanche had just one of those faces that might become very lovely in youth, and would yet quite justify the suspicion that it might become gryphonousque, witch-like, and grim. Yes, Blanche, it is perfectly true! If those large, serious black eyes took a fierce light instead of a tender; if that nose,

which seemed then undecided whether to be straight or to be aquiline, arched off in the latter direction, and assumed the martial, Roman, and imperative character of Roland's manly proboscis; if that face, in childhood too thin, left the blushes of youth to take refuge on two salient peaks by the temples (Cumberland air, too, is famous for the growth of the cheek-bone!),—if all that should happen, and it very well might, then, O Blanche, I wish thou hadst never written me those letters; and I might have done wiser things than steel my heart so obdurately to pretty Ellen Bolding's blue eyes and silk shoes. Now, combining together all these doubts and apprehensions, wonder not, O reader, why I stole so stealthily through the ruined court-yard, crept round to the other side of the tower, gazed wistfully on the sun setting slant, on the high casements of the hall (too high, alas! to look within), and shrank yet to enter,—doing battle, as it were, with my heart.

Steps — one's sense of hearing grows so quick in the Bush-land! — steps, though as light as ever brushed the dew from the harebell! I crept under the shadow of the huge buttress mantled with ivy. A form comes from the little door at an angle in the ruins,—a woman's form. Is it my mother? It is too tall, and the step is more bounding. It winds round the building, it turns to look back, and a sweet voice—a voice strange, yet familiar—calls, tender but chiding, to a truant that lags behind. Poor Juba! he is trailing his long ears on the ground; he is evidently much disturbed in his mind: now he stands still, his nose in the air. Poor Juba! I left thee so slim and so nimble, —

"Thy form, that was fashioned as light as a fay's,  
Has assumed a proportion more round;"

years have sobered thee strangely, and made thee obese and Primmins-like. They have taken too good care of thy creature-comforts, O sensual Mauritanian! Still, in that mystic intelligence we call instinct thou art chasing something that years have not swept from thy memory. Thou art deaf to thy lady's voice, however tender and chiding. That's right! Come near, — nearer, — my cousin Blanche; let me have a

fair look at thee. Plague take the dog! he flies off from her; he has found the scent; he is making up to the buttress! Now — pounce — he is caught, whining ungallant discontent! Shall I not yet see the face? It is buried in Juba's black curls! Kisses too! Wicked Blanche, to waste on a dumb animal what, I heartily hope, many a good Christian would be exceedingly glad of! Juba struggles in vain, and is borne off! I don't think that those eyes can have taken the fierce turn, and Roland's eagle nose can never go with that voice, which has the coo of the dove.

I leave my hiding-place and steal after the Voice and its owner. Where can she be going? Not far. She springs up the hill whereon the lords of the castle once administered justice, — that hill which commands the land far and wide, and from which can be last caught the glimpse of the westering sun. How gracefully still is that attitude of wistful repose! Into what delicate curves do form and drapery harmoniously flow! How softly distinct stands the lithe image against the purple hues of the sky! Then again comes the sweet voice, gay and carolling as a bird's, — now in snatches of song, now in playful appeals to that dull four-footed friend. She is telling him something that must make the black ears stand on end, for I just catch the words, "He is coming," and "home."

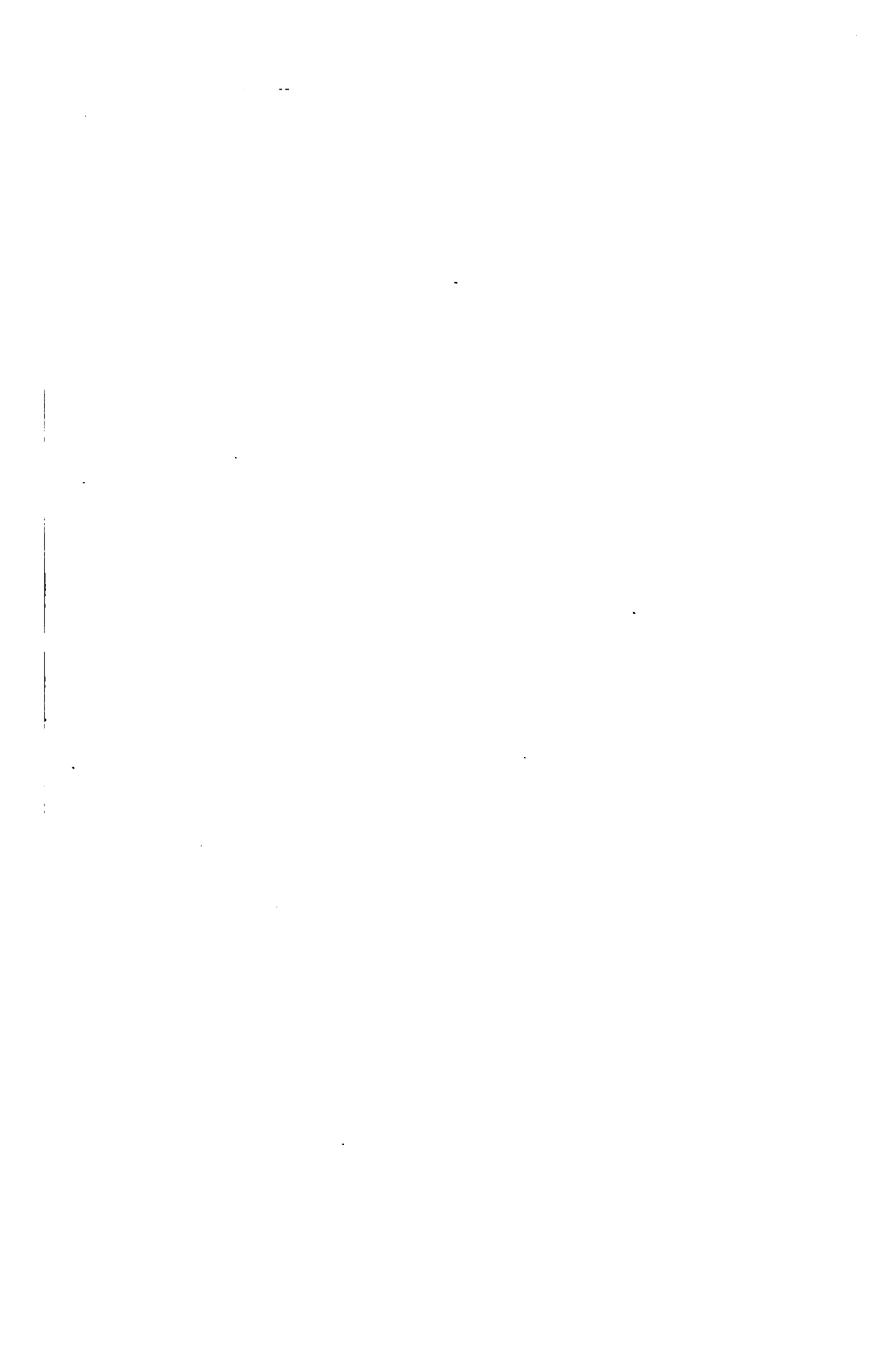
I cannot see the sun set where I lurk in my ambush amidst the brake and the ruins, but I *feel* that the orb has passed from the landscape, in the fresher air of the twilight, in the deeper silence of eve. Lo! Hesper comes forth; at his signal, star after star, come the hosts, —

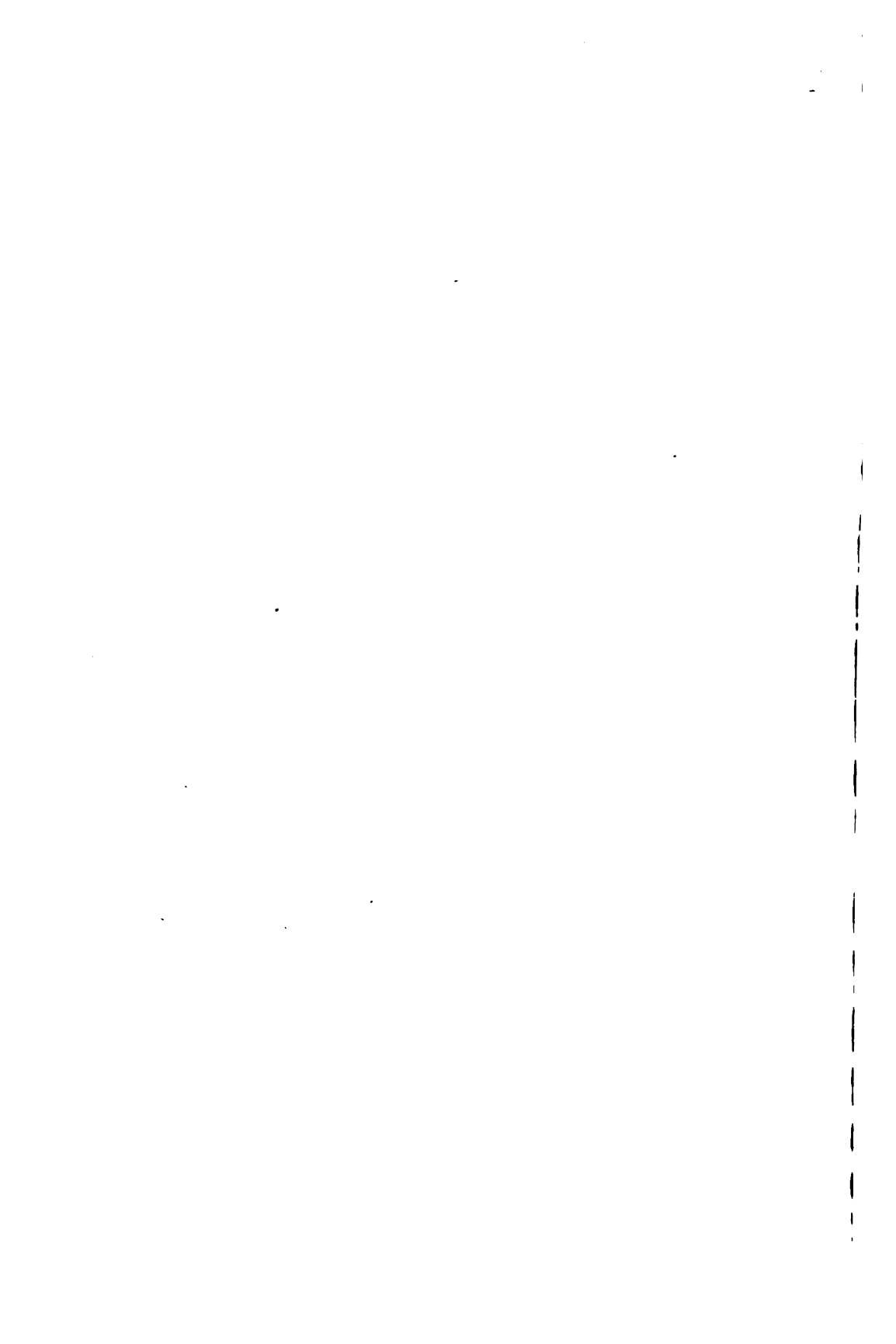
"Ch' eran con lui, quando l' amor divino,  
Mosse da primà quelle cose belle!"

And the sweet voice is hushed.

Then slowly the watcher descends the hill on the opposite side; the form escapes from my view. What charm has gone from the twilight? See, again, where the step steals through the ruins and along the desolate court. Ah! deep and true heart, do I divine the remembrance that leads thee? I pass through the wicket, down the dell, skirt the laurels, and be-











hold the face looking up to the stars, — the face which had nestled to my breast in the sorrow of parting years, long years ago; on the grave where we had sat, — I the boy, thou the infant, — there, O Blanche, is thy fair face, fairer than the fondest dream that had gladdened my exile, vouchsafed to my gaze!

“Blanche, my cousin! again, again, — soul with soul, amidst the dead! Look up, Blanche; it is I.”

---

#### CHAPTER IV.

“Go in first and prepare them, dear Blanche; I will wait by the door. Leave it ajar, that I may see them.”

Roland is leaning against the wall, old armor suspended over the gray head of the soldier. It is but a glance that I give to the dark cheek and high brow: no change there for the worse, — no new sign of decay. Rather, if anything, Roland seems younger than when I left. Calm is the brow, — no shame on it now, Roland; and the lips, once so compressed, smile with ease, — no struggle now, Roland, “not to complain.” A glance shows me all this.

“*Papæ!*” says my father, and I hear the fall of a book, “I can’t read a line. He is coming to-morrow, — to-morrow! If we lived to the age of Methuselah, Kitty, we could never reconcile philosophy and man; that is, if the poor man’s to be plagued with a good, affectionate son!”

And my father gets up and walks to and fro. One minute more, father, one minute more, and I am on thy breast! Time, too, has dealt gently with thee, as he doth with those for whom the wild passions and keen cares of the world never sharpen his scythe. The broad front looks more broad, for the locks are more scanty and thin, but still not a furrow.

Whence comes that short sigh?

"What is really the time, Blanche? Did you look at the turret-clock? Well, just go and look again."

"Kitty," quoth my father, "you have not only asked what time it is thrice within the last ten minutes, but you have got my watch, and Roland's great chronometer, and the Dutch clock out of the kitchen, all before you, and they all concur in the same tale, — to-day is not to-morrow."

"They are all wrong, I know," said my mother, with mild firmness; "and they've never gone right since *he* left."

Now out comes a letter, for I hear the rustle, and then a step glides towards the lamp, and the dear, gentle, womanly face — fair still, fair ever for me, fair as when it bent over my pillow in childhood's first sickness, or when we threw flowers at each other on the lawn at sunny noon! And now Blanche is whispering; and now the flutter, the start, the cry, — "It is true! it is true! Your arms, mother. Close, close round my neck, as in the old time. Father! Roland too! Oh, joy! joy! joy! home again, — home till death!"

---

## CHAPTER V.

FROM a dream of the Bushland, howling dingoes,<sup>1</sup> and the war-whoop of the wild men, I wake and see the sun shining in through the jasmine that Blanche herself has had trained round the window; old school-books neatly ranged round the wall; fishing-rods, cricket-bats, foils, and the old-fashioned gun; and my mother seated by the bed-side; and Juba whining and scratching to get up. Had I taken thy murmured blessing, my mother, for the whoop of the blacks, and Juba's low whine for the howl of the dingoes?

Then what days of calm, exquisite delight, — the interchange of heart with heart; what walks with Roland, and

<sup>1</sup> "Dingoes" — the name given by Australian natives to the wild dogs.

tales of him once our shame, now our pride; and the art with which the old man would lead those walks round by the village, that some favorite gossips might stop and ask, "What news of his brave young honor?"

I strive to engage my uncle in my projects for the repair of the ruins, for the culture of those wide bogs and moorlands: why is it that he turns away and looks down embarrassed? Ah! I guess,—his true heir now is restored to him. He cannot consent that I should invest this dross, for which (the Great Book once published) I have no other use, in the house and the lands that will pass to his son. Neither would he suffer me so to invest even his son's fortune, the bulk of which I still hold in trust for that son. True, in his career my cousin may require to have his money always forthcoming. But I, who have no career,—pooh! these scruples will rob me of half the pleasure my years of toil were to purchase. I must contrive it somehow or other: what if he would let me house and moorland on a long improving lease? Then, for the rest, there is a pretty little property to be sold close by, on which I can retire, when my cousin, as heir of the family, comes, perhaps with a wife, to reside at the Tower. I must consider of all this, and talk it over with Bolt, when my mind is at leisure from happiness to turn to such matters; meanwhile I fall back on my favorite proverb,—“Where there's a will there's a way.”

What smiles and tears, and laughter and careless prattle with my mother, and roundabout questions from her to know if I had never lost my heart in the Bush; and evasive answers from me, to punish her for not letting out that Blanche was so charming. “I fancied Blanche had grown the image of her father, who has a fine martial head certainly, but not seen to advantage in petticoats! How could you be so silent with a theme so attractive?”

“Blanche made me promise.”

Why, I wonder. Therewith I fell musing.

What quiet, delicious hours are spent with my father in his study, or by the pond, where he still feeds the carps, that have grown into Cyprinidian leviathans. The duck, alas! has

departed this life, — the only victim that the Grim King has carried off; so I mourn, but am resigned to that lenient composition of the great tribute to Nature. I am sorry to say the Great Book has advanced but slowly, — by no means yet fit for publication; for it is resolved that it shall not come out as first proposed, a part at a time, but, *totus, teres, atque rotundus*. The matter has spread beyond its original compass; no less than five volumes — and those of the amplest — will contain the History of Human Error. However, we are far in the fourth, and one must not hurry Minerva.

My father is enchanted with Uncle Jack's "noble conduct," as he calls it; but he scolds me for taking the money, and doubts as to the propriety of returning it. In these matters my father is quite as Quixotical as Roland. I am forced to call in my mother as umpire between us, and she settles the matter at once by an appeal to feeling. "Ah, Austin! do you not humble me if you are too proud to accept what is due to you from my brother?"

"*Velit, nolit, quod amica,*" answered my father, taking off and rubbing his spectacles, — "which means, Kitty, that when a man's married he has no will of his own. To think," added Mr. Caxton, musingly, "that in this world one cannot be sure of the simplest mathematical definition. You see, Pisistratus, that the angles of a triangle so decidedly scalene as your Uncle Jack's may be equal to the angles of a right-angled triangle after all!"<sup>1</sup>

The long privation of books has quite restored all my appetite for them. How much I have to pick up; what a compendious scheme of reading I and my father chalk out! I see enough to fill up all the leisure of life. But, somehow or other, Greek and Latin stand still; nothing charms me like

<sup>1</sup> Not having again to advert to Uncle Jack, I may be pardoned for informing the reader, by way of annotation, that he continues to prosper surprisingly in Australia, though the Tibbets' Wheel stands still for want of workmen. Despite of a few ups and downs, I have had no fear of his success until this year (1849), when I tremble to think what effect the discovery of the gold mines in California may have on his lively imagination. If thou escapest that snare, Uncle Jack, *res age, tutus eris* — thou art safe for life!



Italian. Blanche and I are reading *Metastasio*, to the great indignation of my father, who calls it "rubbish," and wants to substitute *Dante*. I have no associations at present with the souls

"Che son contenti  
Nel fuoco;"

I am already one of the "beate gente." Yet, in spite of *Metastasio*, Blanche and I are not so intimate as cousins ought to be. If we are by accident alone, I become as silent as a Turk, as formal as Sir Charles Grandison. I caught myself calling her *Miss Blanche* the other day.

I must not forget thee, honest Squills, nor thy delight at my health and success, nor thy exclamation of pride (one hand on my pulse and the other griping hard the "ball" of my arm)! "It all comes of my citrate of iron: nothing like it for children; it has an effect on the cerebral developments of hope and combativeness." Nor can I wholly omit mention of poor Mrs. Primmins, who still calls me "Master Sisty," and is breaking her heart that I will not wear the new flannel waistcoats she had such pleasure in making, — "Young gentlemen just growing up are so apt to go off in a galloping 'sumption! She knew just such another as Master Sisty, when she lived at Torquay, who wasted away and went out like a *snuff*, all because he would not wear flannel waistcoats." Therewith my mother looks grave, and says, "One can't take too much precaution."

Suddenly the whole neighborhood is thrown into commotion. Trevanion — I beg his pardon, Lord Ulverstone — is coming to settle for good at Compton. Fifty hands are employed daily in putting the grounds into hasty order. Fourgons and wagons and vans have disgorged all the necessaries a great man requires where he means to eat, drink, and sleep, — books, wines, pictures, furniture. I recognize my old patron still. He is in earnest, whatever he does. I meet my friend, his steward, who tells me that Lord Ulverstone finds his favorite seat, near London, too exposed to interruption; and moreover that, as he has there completed all improvements that wealth and energy can effect, he has less occupation for agricultural pursuits, to which he has grown more

and more partial, than on the wide and princely domain which has hitherto wanted the master's eye. "He is a bra' farmer, I know," quoth the steward, "so far as the theory goes; but I don't think we in the North want great lords to teach us how to follow the plough." The steward's sense of dignity is hurt; but he is an honest fellow, and really glad to see the family come to settle in the old place.

They have arrived, and with them the Castletons and a whole *posse comitatus* of guests. The county paper is full of fine names.

"What on earth did Lord Ulverstone mean by pretending to get out of the way of troublesome visitors?"

"My dear Pisistratus," answered my father to that exclamation, "it is not the visitors who come, but the visitors who stay away that most trouble the repose of a retired minister. In all the procession he sees but the images of Brutus and Cassius — that are *not* there! And depend on it also, a retirement so near London did not make noise enough. You see, a retiring statesman is like that fine carp, — the farther he leaps from the water, the greater splash he makes in falling into the weeds! But," added Mr. Caxton, in a repentant tone, "this jesting does not become us; and if I indulged it, it is only because I am heartily glad that Trevanion is likely now to find out his true vocation. And as soon as the fine people he brings with him have left him alone in his library, I trust he will settle to that vocation, and be happier than he has been yet."

"And that vocation, sir, is —"

"Metaphysics," said my father. "He will be quite at home in puzzling over Berkeley, and considering whether the Speaker's chair and the official red boxes were really things whose ideas of figure, extension, and hardness were all in the mind. It will be a great consolation to him to agree with Berkeley, and to find that he has only been baffled by immaterial phantasma!"

My father was quite right. The repining, subtle, truth-weighting Trevanion, plagued by his conscience into seeing all sides of a question (for the least question has more than

two sides, and is hexagonal at least), was much more fitted to discover the origin of ideas than to convince Cabinets and Nations that two and two make four,—a proposition on which he himself would have agreed with Abraham Tucker where that most ingenious and suggestive of all English metaphysicians observes, “Well, persuaded as I am that two and two make four, if I were to meet with a person of credit, candor, and understanding who should sincerely call it in question, I would give him a hearing; for I am not more certain of that than of the whole being greater than a part. And yet I could myself suggest *some considerations that might seem to controvert this point.*”<sup>1</sup> I can so well imagine Trevanion listening to “some person of credit, candor, and understanding” in disproof of that vulgar proposition that twice two make four! But the news of this arrival, including that of Lady Castleton, disturbed me greatly, and I took to long wanderings alone. In one of these rambles they all called at the Tower,—Lord and Lady Ulverstone, the Castletons, and their children. I escaped the visit; and on my return home there was a certain delicacy respecting old associations that restrained much talk, before me, on so momentous an event. Roland, like me, had kept out of the way. Blanche, poor child, ignorant of the antecedents, was the most communicative. And the especial theme she selected was the grace and beauty of Lady Castleton!

A pressing invitation to spend some days at the castle had been cordially given to all. It was accepted only by myself: I wrote word that I would come.

Yes, I longed to prove the strength of my own self-quest, and accurately test the nature of the feelings that had disturbed me. That any sentiment which could be called “love” remained for Lady Castleton, the wife of another, and that other a man with so many claims on my affection as her lord, I held as a moral impossibility. But with all those lively impressions of early youth still engraved on my heart,—impres-

<sup>1</sup> “Light of Nature,”—chapter on Judgment.—See the very ingenious illustration of doubt, “whether the part is always greater than the whole,”—taken from time, or rather eternity.

sions of the image of Fanny Trevanion as the fairest and brightest of human beings, — could I feel free to love again? Could I seek to woo, and rivet to myself forever, the entire and virgin affections of another while there was a possibility that I might compare and regret? No; either I must feel that if Fanny were again single, could be mine without obstacle, human or divine, she had ceased to be the one I would single out of the world; or, though regarding love as the dead, I would be faithful to its memory and its ashes. My mother sighed, and looked fluttered and uneasy all the morning of the day on which I was to repair to Compton. She even seemed cross, for about the third time in her life, and paid no compliment to Mr. Stultz when my shooting-jacket was exchanged for a black frock which that artist had pronounced to be “splendid;” neither did she honor me with any of those little attentions to the contents of my portmanteau, and the perfect “getting up” of my white waistcoats and cravats, which made her natural instincts on such memorable occasions. There was also a sort of querulous, pitying tenderness in her tone, when she spoke to Blanche, which was quite pathetic; though, fortunately, its cause remained dark and impenetrable to the innocent comprehension of one who could not see where the past filled the urns of the future at the fountain of life. My father understood me better, shook me by the hand as I got into the chaise, and muttered, out of Seneca: “Non tanquam transfuga, sed tanquam explorator” (“Not to desert, but examine”).

Quite right.

---

## CHAPTER VI.

AGREEABLY to the usual custom in great houses, as soon as I arrived at Compton I was conducted to my room to adjust my toilet or compose my spirits by solitude, — it wanted an hour to dinner. I had not, however, been thus left ten minutes

before the door opened and Trevanion himself (as I would fain still call him) stood before me. Most cordial were his greeting and welcome; and seating himself by my side, he continued to converse in his peculiar way—bluntly eloquent and carelessly learned—till the half-hour bell rang. He talked on Australia, the Wakefield system, cattle, books, his trouble in arranging his library, his schemes for improving his property and embellishing his grounds, his delight to find my father look so well, his determination to see a great deal of him, whether his old college friend would or not; he talked, in short, of everything except politics and his own past career,—showing only his soreness in that silence. But—independently of the mere work of time—he looked yet more worn and jaded in his leisure than he had done in the full tide of business; and his former abrupt quickness of manner now seemed to partake of feverish excitement. I hoped that my father *would* see much of him, for I felt that the weary mind wanted soothing.

Just as the second bell rang I entered the drawing-room. There were at least twenty guests present,—each guest, no doubt, some planet of fashion or fame, with satellites of its own. But I saw only two forms distinctly: first, Lord Castleton, conspicuous with star and garter,—somewhat ampler and portlier in proportions, and with a frank dash of gray in the silky waves of his hair, but still as pre-eminent as ever for that beauty, the charm of which depends less than any other upon youth, arising, as it does, from a felicitous combination of bearing and manner, and that exquisite suavity of expression which steals into the heart and pleases so much that it becomes a satisfaction to admire! Of Lord Castleton, indeed, it might be said, as of Alcibiades, “that he was beautiful at every age.” I felt my breath come thick, and a mist passed before my eyes as Lord Castleton led me through the crowd, and the radiant vision of Fanny Trevanion—how altered, and how dazzling!—burst upon me.

I felt the light touch of that hand of snow; but no guilty thrill shot through my veins. I heard the voice, musical as ever,—lower than it was once, and more subdued in its key,

but steadfast and untremulous: it was no longer the voice that made "my soul plant itself in the ears."<sup>1</sup> The event was over, and I knew that the dream had fled from the waking world forever.

"Another old friend!" as Lady Ulverstone came forth from a little group of children, leading one fine boy of nine years old, while one, two or three years younger, clung to her gown. "Another old friend! and," added Lady Ulverstone, after the first kind greetings, "two new ones when the old are gone." The slight melancholy left the voice as, after presenting to me the little viscount, she drew forward the more bashful Lord Albert, who indeed had something of his grandsire and namesake's look of refined intelligence in his brow and eyes.

The watchful tact of Lord Castleton was quick in terminating whatever embarrassment might belong to these introductions, as, leaning lightly on my arm, he drew me forward and presented me to the guests more immediately in our neighborhood, who seemed by their earnest cordiality to have been already prepared for the introduction.

Dinner was now announced, and I welcomed that sense of relief and segregation with which one settles into one's own "particular" chair at your large miscellaneous entertainment.

I stayed three days at that house. How truly had Trevanion said that Fanny would make "an excellent great lady." What perfect harmony between her manners and her position! just retaining enough of the girl's seductive gayety and bewitching desire to please, to soften the new dignity of bearing she had unconsciously assumed, — less, after all, as great lady, than as wife and mother; with a fine breeding, perhaps a little languid and artificial as compared with her lord's, — which sprang, fresh and healthful, wholly from nature, — but still so void of all the chill of condescension or the subtle impertinence that belongs to that order of the inferior *noblesse* which boasts the name of "exclusives;" with what grace, void of prudery, she took the adulation of the flatterers, turning from them to her children, or escaping lightly to Lord

<sup>1</sup> Sir Philip Sidney.

Castleton, with an ease that drew round her at once the protection of hearth and home!

And certainly Lady Castleton was more incontestably beautiful than Fanny Trevanion had been.

All this I acknowledged, not with a sigh and a pang, but with a pure feeling of pride and delight. I might have loved madly and presumptuously, as boys will do; but I had loved worthily, — the love left no blush on my manhood; and Fanny's very happiness was my perfect and total cure of every wound in my heart not quite scarred over before. Had she been discontented, sorrowful, without joy in the ties she had formed, there might have been more danger that I should brood over the past and regret the loss of its idol. Here there was none. And the very improvement in her beauty had so altered its character — *so* altered — that Fanny Trevanion and Lady Castleton seemed two persons. And thus observing and listening to her, I could now dispassionately perceive such differences in our natures as seemed to justify Trevanion's assertion, which once struck me as so monstrous, "that we should not have been happy had fate permitted our union." Pure-hearted and simple though she remained in the artificial world, still that world was her element; its interests occupied her; its talk, though just chastened from scandal, flowed from her lips. To borrow the words of a man who was himself a courtier, and one so distinguished that he could afford to sneer at Chesterfield,<sup>1</sup> "*She* had the routine of that style of conversation which is a sort of gold leaf, that is a great embellishment where it is joined to anything else." I will not add, "but makes a very poor figure by itself," — for *that* Lady Castleton's conversation certainly did not do, — perhaps, indeed, because it was not "by itself," — and the gold leaf was all the better for being thin, since it could not cover even the surface of the sweet and amiable nature over which it was spread. Still, this was not the mind in which now, in maturer experience, I would seek to find sympathy with manly action, or companionship in the charms of intellectual leisure.

<sup>1</sup> Lord Hervey's Memoirs of George II.

There was about this same beautiful favorite of nature and fortune a certain helplessness, which had even its grace in that high station, and which, perhaps, tended to insure her domestic peace, for it served to attach her to those who had won influence over her, and was happily accompanied by a most affectionate disposition. But still, if less favored by circumstances, less sheltered from every wind that could visit her too roughly; if, as the wife of a man of inferior rank, she had failed of that high seat and silken canopy reserved for the spoiled darlings of fortune, — that helplessness might have become querulous. I thought of poor Ellen Bolding and her silken shoes. Fanny Trevanion seemed to have come into the world with silk shoes, — not to walk where there was a stone or a brier. I heard something, in the gossip of those around, that confirmed this view of Lady Castleton's character, while it deepened my admiration of her lord, and showed me how wise had been her choice, and how resolutely he had prepared himself to vindicate his own. One evening, as I was sitting, a little apart from the rest, with two men of the London world, to whose talk — for it ran upon the *on-dits* and anecdotes of a region long strange to me — I was a silent but amused listener, one of the two said: "Well, I don't know anywhere a more excellent creature than Lady Castleton: so fond of her children, and her tone to Castleton so exactly what it ought to be, — so affectionate, and yet, as it were, respectful. And the more credit to her if, as they say, she was not in love with him when she married (to be sure, handsome as he is, he is twice her age)! And no woman could have been more flattered and courted by Lotharios and lady-killers than Lady Castleton has been. I confess, to my shame, that Castleton's luck puzzles me, for it is rather an exception to my general experience."

"My dear —," said the other, who was one of those wise men of pleasure who occasionally startle us into wondering how they come to be so clever, and yet rest contented with mere drawing-room celebrity, — men who seem always idle, yet appear to have read everything; always indifferent to what passes before them, yet who know the character and



divine the secrets of everybody, — “my dear ——,” said the gentleman, “you would not be puzzled if you had studied Lord Castleton, instead of her ladyship. Of all the conquests ever made by Sedley Beaudesert, — when the two fairest dames of the Faubourg are said to have fought for his smiles in the Bois de Boulogne, — no conquest ever cost him such pains, or so tasked his knowledge of women, as that of his wife after marriage. He was not satisfied with her hand, he was resolved to have her whole heart, — ‘one entire and perfect chrysolite;’ and he has succeeded! Never was husband so watchful and so little jealous, never one who confided so generously in all that was best in his wife, yet was so alert in protecting and guarding her wherever she was weakest. When in the second year of marriage that dangerous German Prince Von Leibenfels attached himself so perseveringly to Lady Castleton, and the scandal-mongers pricked up their ears, in hopes of a victim, I watched Castleton with as much interest as if I had been looking over Deschappelles playing at chess. You never saw anything so masterly; he pitted himself against his highness with the cool confidence, not of a blind spouse, but a fortunate rival. He surpassed him in the delicacy of his attentions, he outshone him by his careless magnificence. Leibenfels had the impertinence to send Lady Castleton a bouquet of some rare flowers just in fashion. Castleton, an hour before, had filled her whole balcony with the same costly exotics, as if they were too common for nose-gays, and only just worthy to bloom for her a day. Young and really accomplished as Leibenfels is, Castleton eclipsed him by his grace, and fooled him with his wit; he laid little plots to turn his mustache and guitar into ridicule; he seduced him into a hunt with the buckhounds (though Castleton himself had not hunted before since he was thirty), and drew him, spluttering German oaths, out of the slough of a ditch; he made him the laughter of the clubs; he put him fairly out of fashion, — and all with such suavity, and politeness, and bland sense of superiority, that it was the finest piece of high comedy you ever beheld. The poor prince, who had been coxcomb enough to lay a bet with a Frenchman as to his success

with the English in general, and Lady Castleton in particular, went away with a face as long as Don Quixote's. If you had but seen him at S—— House, the night before he took leave of the island, and his comical grimace when Castleton offered him a pinch of the Beaudesert mixture! No; the fact is that Castleton made it the object of his existence, the masterpiece of his art, to secure to himself a happy home and the entire possession of his wife's heart. The first two or three years, I fear, cost him more trouble than any other man ever took, — with his own wife, at least; but he may now rest in peace, — Lady Castleton is won, and forever."

As my gentleman ceased, Lord Castleton's noble head rose above the group standing round him; and I saw Lady Castleton turn with a look of well-bred fatigue from a handsome young fop who had affected to lower his voice while he spoke to her, and, encountering the eyes of her husband, the look changed at once into one of such sweet, smiling affection, such frank, unmistakable wife-like pride, that it seemed a response to the assertion, — "Lady Castleton is won, and forever."

Yes, that story increased my admiration for Lord Castleton; it showed me with what forethought and earnest sense of responsibility he had undertaken the charge of a life, the guidance of a character yet undeveloped; it lastingly acquitted him of the levity that had been attributed to Sedley Beaudesert. But I felt more than ever contented that the task had devolved on one whose temper and experience had so fitted him to discharge it. That German prince made me tremble from sympathy with the husband, and in a sort of relative shudder for myself! Had that episode happened to me, I could never have drawn "high comedy" from it; I could never have so happily closed the fifth act with a pinch of the Beaudesert mixture! No, no; to my homely sense of man's life and employment there was nothing alluring in the prospect of watching over the golden tree in the garden, with a "woe to the Argus if Mercury once lull him to sleep!" Wife of mine shall need no watching, save in sickness and sorrow! Thank Heaven that my way of life does not lead through the roseate thoroughfares, beset with German princes laying bets

for my perdition, and fine gentlemen admiring the skill with which I play at chess for so terrible a stake! To each rank and each temper, its own laws. I acknowledge that Fanny is an excellent marchioness, and Lord Castleton an incomparable marquis. But, Blanche! if I can win thy true, simple heart, I trust I shall begin at the fifth act of high comedy, and say at the altar, —

“Once won, won forever.”

---

## CHAPTER VII.

I RODE home on a horse my host lent me; and Lord Castleton rode part of the way with me, accompanied by his two boys, who bestrode manfully their Shetland ponies and cantered on before us. I paid some compliment to the spirit and intelligence of these children, — a compliment they well deserved.

“Why, yes,” said the marquis, with a father’s becoming pride, “I hope neither of them will shame his grandsire, Trevanion. Albert (though not quite the wonder poor Lady Ulverstone declares him to be) is rather too precocious, and it is all I can do to prevent his being spoilt by flattery to his cleverness, which, I think, is much worse than even flattery to rank, — a danger to which, despite Albert’s destined inheritance, the elder brother is more exposed. Eton soon takes out the conceit of the latter and more vulgar kind. I remember Lord —— (you know what an unpretending, good-natured fellow he is now) strutting into the play-ground, a raw boy, with his chin up in the air, and burly Dick Johnson (rather a tuft-hunter now, I’m afraid) coming up and saying, ‘Well, sir, and who the deuce are you?’ ‘Lord ——,’ says the poor devil unconsciously, ‘eldest son of the Marquis of ——.’ ‘Oh, indeed!’ cries Johnson; ‘then there’s one kick for my lord,

and two for the marquis!' I am not fond of kicking, but I doubt if anything ever did — more good than those three kicks. But," continued Lord Castleton, "when one flatters a boy for his cleverness, even Eton itself cannot kick the conceit out of him. Let him be last in the form, and the greatest dunce ever flogged, there are always people to say that your public schools don't do for your great geniuses. And it is ten to one but what the father is plagued into taking the boy home and giving him a private tutor, who fixes him into a prig forever. A coxcomb in dress," said the marquis, smiling, "is a trifle it would ill become me to condemn, and I own that I would rather see a youth a fop than a sloven; but a coxcomb in ideas — why, the younger he is, the more unnatural and disagreeable. Now, Albert, over that hedge, sir."

"That hedge, papa? The pony will never do it."

"Then," said Lord Castleton, taking off his hat with politeness, "I fear you will deprive us of the pleasure of your company."

The boy laughed, and made gallantly for the hedge, though I saw by his change of color that it a little alarmed him. The pony could not clear the hedge, but it was a pony of tact and resources, and it scrambled through like a cat, inflicting sundry rents and tears on a jacket of Raphael blue.

Lord Castleton said, smiling, "You see, I teach them to get through a difficulty one way or the other. Between you and me," he added seriously, "I perceive a very different world rising round the next generation from that in which I first went forth and took my pleasure. I shall rear my boys accordingly. Rich noblemen must nowadays be useful men; and if they can't leap over briars, they must scramble through them. Don't you agree with me?"

"Yes, heartily."

"Marriage makes a man much wiser," said the marquis, after a pause. "I smile now to think how often I sighed at the thought of growing old. Now I reconcile myself to the gray hairs without dreams of a wig, and enjoy youth still; for," pointing to his sons, "it is *there*!"

"He has very nearly found out the secret of the saffron bag

now," said my father, pleased and rubbing his hands, when I repeated this talk with Lord Castleton. "But I fear poor Trevanion," he added, with a compassionate change of countenance, "is still far away from the sense of Lord Bacon's receipt. And his wife, you say, out of very love for him, keeps always drawing discord from the one jarring wire."

"You must talk to her, sir."

"I will," said my father, angrily, "and scold her too, foolish woman! I shall tell her Luther's advice to the Prince of Anhalt."

"What was that, sir?"

"Only to throw a baby into the River Maldon because it had sucked dry five wet-nurses besides the mother, and must therefore be a changeling. Why, that ambition of hers would suck dry all the mother's milk in the genus mammalian. And such a withered, rickety, malign little changeling too! She shall fling it into the river, by all that is holy!" cried my father; and, suiting the action to the word, away into the pond went the spectacles he had been rubbing indignantly for the last three minutes. "*Papæ!*" faltered my father, aghast, while the Cyprinidæ, mistaking the dip of the spectacles for an invitation to dinner, came scudding up to the bank. "It is all your fault," said Mr. Caxton, recovering himself. "Get me the new tortoise-shell spectacles and a large slice of bread. You see that when fish are reduced to a pond they recognize a benefactor, which they never do when rising at flies or groping for worms in the waste world of a river. Hem!—a hint for the Ulverstones. Besides the bread and the spectacles, just look out and bring me the old black-letter copy of Saint Anthony's "Sermon to Fishes."

## CHAPTER VIII.

SOME weeks now have passed since my return to the Tower; the Castletons are gone, and all Trevanion's gay guests. And since these departures, visits between the two houses have been interchanged often, and the bonds of intimacy are growing close. Twice has my father held long conversations apart with Lady Ulverstone (my mother is not foolish enough to feel a pang now at such confidences), and the result has become apparent. Lady Ulverstone has ceased all talk against the world and the public, ceased to fret the galled pride of her husband with irritating sympathy. She has made herself the true partner of his present occupations, as she was of those in the past; she takes interest in farming, and gardens, and flowers, and those philosophical peaches which come from trees academical that Sir William Temple reared in his graceful retirement. She does more, — she sits by her husband's side in the library, reads the books he reads, or if in Latin, coaxes him into construing them. Insensibly she leads him into studies farther and farther remote from the Blue Books and Hansard; and taking my father's hint, —

“Allures to brighter worlds, and leads the way.”

They are inseparable. Darby-and-Joan-like, you see them together in the library, the garden, or the homely little ponyphaeton for which Lord Ulverstone has resigned the fast-trotting cob once identified with the eager looks of the busy Trevanion. It is most touching, most beautiful! And to think what a victory over herself the proud woman must have obtained! Never a thought that seems to murmur, never a word to recall the ambitious man back from the philosophy into which his active mind flies for refuge. And with the effort her brow has become so serene! That careworn expres-

sion which her fine features once wore, is fast vanishing. And what affects me most, is to think that this change (which is already settling into happiness) has been wrought by Austin's counsels and appeals to her sense and affection. "It is to you," he said, "that Trevanion must look for more than comfort, — for cheerfulness and satisfaction. Your child is gone from you; the world ebbs away: you two should be all in all to each other. Be so." Thus, after paths so devious, meet those who have parted in youth, now on the verge of age, — there, in the same scenes where Austin and Ellinor had first formed acquaintance; he aiding her to soothe the wounds inflicted by the ambition that had separated their lots, and both taking counsel to insure the happiness of the rival she had preferred.

After all this vexed public life of toil and care and ambition, to see Trevanion and Ellinor drawing closer and closer to each other, knowing private life and its charms for the first time, — verily, it would have been a theme for an elegiast like Tibullus.

But all this while a younger love, with no blurred leaves to erase from the chronicle, has been keeping sweet account of the summer time. "Very near are two hearts that have no guile between them," saith a proverb, traced back to Confucius. O ye days of still sunshine, reflected back from ourselves! O ye haunts endeared evermore by a look, tone, or smile, or rapt silence, when more and more with each hour unfolded before me that nature, so tenderly coy, so cheerful though serious, so attuned by simple cares to affection, yet so filled, from soft musings and solitude, with a poetry that gave grace to duties the homeliest, setting life's trite things to music! Here nature and fortune concurred alike, — equal in birth and pretensions, similar in tastes and in objects, loving the healthful activity of purpose, but content to find it around us, neither envying the wealthy nor vying with the great, each framed by temper to look on the bright side of life and find founts of delight and green spots fresh with verdure where eyes but accustomed to cities could see but the sands and the mirage. While afar, as man's duty, I had gone

through the travail that, in wrestling with fortune, gives pause to the heart to recover its losses and know the value of love in its graver sense of life's earnest realities, Heaven had reared, at the thresholds of home, the young tree that should cover the roof with its blossoms and embalm with its fragrance the daily air of my being.

It had been the joint prayer of those kind ones I left that such might be my reward, and each had contributed, in his or her several way, to fit that fair life for the ornament and joy of the one that now asked to guard and to cherish it. From Roland came that deep, earnest honor,—a man's in its strength, and a woman's in its delicate sense of refinement. From Roland, that quick taste for all things noble in poetry and lovely in nature,—the eye that sparkled to read how Bayard stood alone at the bridge and saved an army; or wept over the page that told how the dying Sidney put the bowl from his burning lips. Is that too masculine a spirit for some? Let each please himself. Give me the woman who can echo all thoughts that are noblest in men! And that eye, too,—like Roland's,—could pause to note each finer mesh in the wonderful web-work of beauty. No landscape to her was the same yesterday and to-day: a deeper shade from the skies could change the face of the moors; the springing up of fresh wild-flowers, the very song of some bird unheard before, lent variety to the broad rugged heath. Is that too simple a source of pleasure for some to prize? Be it so to those who need the keen stimulants that cities afford. But if we were to pass all our hours in those scenes, it was something to have the tastes which own no monotony in Nature.

All this came from Roland; and to this, with thoughtful wisdom, my father had added enough knowledge from books to make those tastes more attractive, and to lend to impulsive perception of beauty and goodness the culture that draws finer essence from beauty, and expands the Good into the Better by heightening the sight of the survey: hers knowledge enough to sympathize with intellectual pursuits, not enough to dispute on man's province,—Opinion. Still, whether in nature or in lore, still —



"The fairest garden in her looks,  
And in her mind the choicest books!"

And yet, thou wise Austin, — and thou, Roland, poet that never wrote a verse, — yet your work had been incomplete; but then Woman stepped in, and the mother gave to her she designed for a daughter the last finish of meek, every-day charities, — the mild household virtues; "the soft word that turneth away wrath;" the angelic pity for man's rougher faults; the patience that bideth its time, and, exacting no "rights of woman," subjugates us, delighted, to the invisible thrall.

Dost thou remember, my Blanche, that soft summer evening when the vows our eyes had long interchanged stole at last from the lip? Wife mine, come to my side; look over me while I write: there, thy tears (happy tears are they not, Blanche?) have blotted the page! Shall we tell the world more? Right, my Blanche; no words should profane the place where those tears have fallen!

And here I would fain conclude; but alas and alas! that I cannot associate with our hopes, on this side the grave, him who, we fondly hoped (even on the bridal-day that gave his sister to my arms), would come to the hearth where his place now stood vacant, contented with glory, and fitted at last for the tranquil happiness which long years of repentance and trial had deserved.

Within the first year of my marriage, and shortly after a gallant share in a desperate action which had covered his name with new honors, just when we were most elated, in the blinded vanity of human pride, came the fatal news! The brief career was run. He died, as I knew he would have prayed to die, at the close of a day ever memorable in the annals of that marvellous empire which valor without parallel has annexed to the Throne of the Isles. He died in the arms of Victory, and his last smile met the eyes of the noble chief who, even in that hour, could pause from the tide of triumph by the victim it had cast on its bloody shore. "One favor," faltered the dying man; "I have a father at home, — he, too,

is a soldier. In my tent is my will: it gives all I have to him,—he can take it without shame. That is not enough! Write to him—you, with your own hand—and tell him how his son fell!” And the hero fulfilled the prayer; and that letter is dearer to Roland than all the long roll of the ancestral dead! Nature has reclaimed her rights, and the forefathers recede before the son.

In a side chapel of the old Gothic church, amidst the mouldering tombs of those who fought at Acre and Agincourt, a fresh tablet records the death of HERBERT DE CAXTON, with the simple inscription,—

HE FELL ON THE FIELD:  
HIS COUNTRY MOURNED HIM,  
AND HIS FATHER IS RESIGNED.

Years have rolled away since that tablet was placed there, and changes have passed on that nook of earth which bounds our little world: fair chambers have sprung up amidst the desolate ruins; far and near, smiling corn-fields replace the bleak, dreary moors. The land supports more retainers than ever thronged to the pennon of its barons of old, and Roland can look from his Tower over domains that are reclaimed, year by year, from the waste, till the ploughshare shall win a lordship more opulent than those feudal chiefs ever held by the tenure of the sword. And the hospitable mirth that had fled from the ruin has been renewed in the Hall, and rich and poor, great and lowly, have welcomed the rise of an ancient house from the dust of decay. All those dreams of Roland's youth are fulfilled; but they do not gladden his heart like the thought that his son, at the last, was worthy of his line, and the hope that no gulf shall yawn between the two when the Grand Circle is rounded, and man's past and man's future meet where Time disappears. Never was that lost one forgotten; never was his name breathed but tears rushed to the eyes; and each morning the peasant going to his labor might see Roland steal down the dell to the deep-set door of the chapel. None presume there to follow his steps or intrude on his solemn thoughts; for there, in sight of that tablet, are his

orisons made, and the remembrance of the dead forms a part of the commune with heaven. But the old man's step is still firm and his brow still erect; and you may see in his face that it was no hollow boast which proclaimed that the "father was resigned." And ye who doubt if too Roman a hardness might not be found in that Christian resignation, think what it is to have feared for a son the life of shame, and ask then if the sharpest grief to a father is in a son's death of honor!

Years have passed, and two fair daughters play at the knees of Blanche, or creep round the footstool of Austin, waiting patiently for the expected kiss when he looks up from the Great Book, now drawing fast to its close; or if Roland enter the room, forget all their sober demureness, and unawed by the terrible *Papæ!* run clamorous for the promised swing in the orchard, or the fiftieth recital of "Chevy Chase."

For my part, I take the goods the gods provide me, and am contented with girls that have the eyes of their mother; but Roland, ungrateful man, begins to grumble that we are so neglectful of the rights of heirs-male. He is in doubt whether to lay the fault on Mr. Squills or on us, — I am not sure that he does not think it a conspiracy of all three to settle the representation of the martial De Caxtons on the "spindle side." Whosoever be the right person to blame, an omission so fatal to the straight line in the pedigree is rectified at last, and Mrs. Primmings again rushes, or rather rolls — in the movement natural to forms globular and spherul — into my father's room with —

"Sir, sir, it is a boy!"

Whether my father asked also this time that question so puzzling to metaphysical inquirers, "What is a boy?" I know not: I rather suspect he had not leisure for so abstract a question; for the whole household burst on him, and my mother, in that storm peculiar to the elements of the Mind Feminine — a sort of sunshiny storm between laughter and crying — whirled him off to behold the *Neogilos*.

Now, some months after that date, on a winter's evening, we were all assembled in the hall, which was still our usual apartment, since its size permitted to each his own segregated

and peculiar employment. A large screen fenced off from interruption my father's erudite settlement; and quite out of sight, behind that impermeable barrier, he was now calmly winding up that eloquent peroration which will astonish the world whenever, by Heaven's special mercy, the printer's devils have done with "The History of Human Error." In another nook my uncle had ensconced himself, stirring his coffee (in the cup my mother had presented to him so many years ago, and which had miraculously escaped all the ills the race of crockery is heir to), a volume of "Ivanhoe" in the other hand, and, despite the charm of the Northern Wizard, his eye *not* on the page. On the wall behind him hangs the picture of Sir Herbert de Caxton, the soldier-comrade of Sidney and Drake, and at the foot of the picture Roland has slung his son's sword beside the letter that spoke of his death, which is framed and glazed, — sword and letter had become as the last, nor least honored, Penates of the hall; the son was grown an ancestor.

Not far from my uncle sat Mr. Squills, employed in mapping out phrenological divisions on a cast he had made from the skull of one of the Australian aborigines, — a ghastly present, which (in compliance with a yearly letter to that effect) I had brought him over, together with a stuffed "wombat" and a large bundle of sarsaparilla. (For the satisfaction of his patients, I may observe, parenthetically, that the skull and the "wombat" — that last is a creature between a miniature pig and a very small badger — were not precisely packed up with the sarsaparilla!) Farther on stood open, but idle, the new pianoforte, at which, before my father had given his preparatory hem, and sat down to the Great Book, Blanche and my mother had been trying hard to teach me to bear the third in the glee of "The Chough and the Crow to roost have gone," — vain task, in spite of all flattering assurances that I have a very fine "bass" if I could but manage to humor it. Fortunately for the ears of the audience, that attempt is now abandoned. My mother is hard at work on her tapestry, — the last pattern in fashion, to wit, a rosy-cheeked young troubadour playing the lute under a salmon-colored balcony; the two little girls look gravely on, prematurely in love, I suspect, with

the troubadour; and Blanche and I have stolen away into a corner, which, by some strange delusion, we consider out of sight, and in that corner is the cradle of the *Neogilos*. Indeed, it is not our fault that it is there, — Roland would have it so; and the baby is so good, too, he never cries, — at least so say Blanche and my mother; at all events, he does not cry to-night. And, indeed, that child is a wonder! He seems to know and respond to what was uppermost at our hearts when he was born; and yet more when Roland (contrary, I dare say, to all custom) permitted neither mother nor nurse nor creature of womankind to hold him at the baptismal font, but bent over the new Christian his own dark, high-featured face, reminding one of the eagle that hid the infant in its nest and watched over it with wings that had battled with the storm: and from that moment the child, who took the name of HERBERT, seemed to recognize Roland better than his nurse or even mother, — seemed to know that in giving him that name we sought to give Roland his son once more! Never did the old man come near the infant but it smiled and crowed and stretched out its little arms; and then the mother and I would press each other's hand secretly, and were not jealous. Well, then, Blanche and Pisistratus were seated near the cradle and talking in low whispers, when my father pushed aside the screen and said,—

“There, the work is done! And now it may go to press as soon as you will.”

Congratulations poured in; my father bore them with his usual equanimity; and standing on the hearth, his hand in his waistcoat, he said, musingly, “Among the last delusions of Human Error I have had to notice Rousseau's phantasy of Perpetual Peace, and all the like pastoral dreams, which preceded the bloodiest wars that have convulsed the earth for more than a thousand years!”

“And to judge by the newspapers,” said I, “the same delusions are renewed again. Benevolent theorists go about prophesying peace as a positive certainty, deduced from that sibyl-book the ledger; and we are never again to buy cannons, provided only we can exchange cotton for corn.”

MR. SQUILLS (who, having almost wholly retired from general business, has, from want of something better to do, attended sundry "Demonstrations in the North," since which he has talked much about the march of improvement, the spirit of the age, and "us of the nineteenth century"). — "I heartily hope that those benevolent theorists *are* true prophets. I have found, in the course of my professional practice, that men go out of the world quite fast enough, without hacking them into pieces or blowing them up into the air. War is a great evil."

BLANCHE (passing by Squills, and glancing towards Roland). — "Hush!"

Roland remains silent.

MR. CAXTON. — "War is a great evil; but evil is admitted by Providence into the agency of creation, physical and moral. The existence of evil has puzzled wiser heads than ours, Squills. But, no doubt, there is One above who has his reasons for it. The combative bump seems as common to the human skull as the philoprogenitive, — if it is in our organization, be sure it is not there without cause. Neither is it just to man, nor wisely submissive to the Disposer of all events, to suppose that war is wholly and wantonly produced by human crimes and follies, — that it conduces *only* to ill, and does not as often arise from the necessities interwoven in the framework of society, and speed the great ends of the human race, conformably with the designs of the Omniscient. Not one great war has ever desolated the earth, but has left behind it seeds that have ripened into blessings incalculable!"

MR. SQUILLS (with the groan of a dissentient at a "Demonstration"). — "Oh! oh! OH!"

Luckless Squills! Little could he have foreseen the shower-bath, or rather *douche*, of erudition that fell splash on his head as he pulled the string with that impertinent *Oh! oh!* Down first came the Persian war, with Median myriads disgorging all the rivers they had drunk up in their march through the East; all the arts, all the letters, all the sciences, all the notions of liberty that we inherit from Greece, — my father rushed on with them all, sousing Squills with his proofs

that without the Persian war Greece would never have risen to be the teacher of the world. Before the gasping victim could take breath, down came Hun, Goth, and Vandal on Italy and Squills.

"What, sir!" cried my father, "don't you see that from those irruptions on demoralized Rome came the regeneration of manhood, the re-baptism of earth from the last soils of paganism, and the remote origin of whatever of Christianity yet exists free from the idolatries with which Rome contaminated the faith?"

Squills held up his hands and made a splutter. Down came Charlemagne, paladins and all! There my father was grand! What a picture he made of the broken, jarring, savage elements of barbaric society. And the iron hand of the great Frank, — settling the nations and founding existent Europe. Squills was now fast sinking into coma or stupefaction; but catching at a straw as he heard the word "Crusades," he stuttered forth, "Ah! *there* I defy you."

"Defy me there!" cries my father; and one would think the ocean was in the shower-bath, it came down with such a rattle. My father scarcely touched on the smaller points in excuse for the Crusades, though he recited very volubly all the humaner arts introduced into Europe by that invasion of the East, and showed how it had served civilization by the vent it afforded for the rude energies of chivalry, by the element of destruction to feudal tyranny that it introduced, by its use in the emancipation of burghs and the disruption of serfdom. But he painted, in colors vivid as if caught from the skies of the East, the great spread of Mahometanism and the danger it menaced to Christian Europe, and drew up the Godfreys and Tancred and Richards as a league of the Age and Necessity against the terrible progress of the sword and the Koran. "You call them madmen," cried my father; "but the frenzy of nations is the statemanship of fate! How know you that — but for the terror inspired by the hosts who marched to Jerusalem — how know you that the Crescent had not waved over other realms than those which Roderic lost to the Moor? If Christianity had been less a passion, and the passion had

less stirred up all Europe, how know you that the creed of the Arab (which was then, too, a passion) might not have planted its mosques in the forum of Rome and on the site of Notre Dame? For in the war between creeds, — when the creeds are embraced by vast races, — think you that the reason of sages can cope with the passion of millions? Enthusiasm must oppose enthusiasm. The crusader fought for the tomb of Christ, but he saved the life of Christendom.”

My father paused. Squills was quite passive; he struggled no more, — he was drowned.

“So,” resumed Mr. Caxton, more quietly, “so, if later wars yet perplex us as to the good that the All-wise One draws from their evils, our posterity may read their uses as clearly as we now read the finger of Providence resting on the barrows of Marathon, or guiding Peter the Hermit to the battle-fields of Palestine. Nor, while we admit the evil to the passing generation, can we deny that many of the virtues that make the ornament and vitality of peace sprang up first in the convulsion of war!” Here Squills began to evince faint signs of resuscitation, when my father let fly at him one of those numberless waterworks which his prodigious memory kept in constant supply. “Hence,” said he, “hence, not unjustly has it been remarked by a philosopher, shrewd at least in worldly experience [Squills again closed his eyes, and became exanimate]: ‘It is strange to imagine that war, which of all things appears the most savage, should be the passion of the most heroic spirits. But ’t is in war that the knot of fellowship is closest drawn; ’t is in war that mutual succor is most given, mutual danger run, and common affection most exerted and employed: for heroism and philanthropy are almost one and the same!’”<sup>1</sup>

My father ceased, and mused a little. Squills, if still living, thought it prudent to feign continued extinction.

“Not,” said Mr. Caxton, resuming, “not but what I hold it our duty never to foster into a passion what we must rather submit to as an awful necessity. You say truly, Mr. Squills,

<sup>1</sup> Shaftesbury.



— war is an evil ; and woe to those who, on slight pretences,  
open the gates of Janus, —

“ ‘ The dire abode,  
And the fierce issues of the furious god.’ ”

Mr. Squills, after a long pause, — employed in some of the more handy means for the reanimation of submerged bodies, supporting himself close to the fire in a semi-erect posture, with gentle friction, self-applied, to each several limb, and copious recourse to certain steaming stimulants which my compassionate hands prepared for him, — stretches himself and says feebly, “ In short, then, not to provoke further discussion, you would go to war in defence of your country. Stop, sir, stop, for Heaven’s sake ! I agree with you, I agree with you ! But, fortunately, there is little chance now that any new Boney will build boats at Boulogne to invade us.”

MR. CAXTON. — “ I am not so sure of that, Mr. Squills. [Squills falls back with a glassy stare of deprecating horror.] I don’t read the newspapers very often, but the past helps me to judge of the present.”

Therewith my father earnestly recommended to Mr. Squills the careful perusal of certain passages in Thucydides, just previous to the outbreak of the Peloponnesian war (Squills hastily nodded the most servile acquiescence), and drew an ingenious parallel between the signs and symptoms foreboding that outbreak and the very apprehension of coming war which was evinced by the recent *Io pœans* to peace.<sup>1</sup> And after sundry notable and shrewd remarks, tending to show where elements for war were already ripening, amidst clashing opinions and disorganized states, he wound up with saying : “ So that, all things considered, I think we had better just keep up enough of the bellicose spirit not to think it a sin if we are called upon to fight for our pestles and mortars, our three-per

<sup>1</sup> When this work was first published, Mr. Caxton was generally deemed a very false prophet in these anticipations, and sundry critics were pleased to consider his apology for war neither seasonable nor philosophical. That Mr. Caxton was right, and the politicians opposed to him have been somewhat ludicrously wrong, may be briefly accounted for, — Mr. Caxton had read history.

cents, goods, chattels, and liberties. Such a time must come, sooner or later, even though the whole world were spinning cotton and printing sprigged calicoes. *We* may not see it, Squills, but that young gentleman in the cradle whom you have lately brought into light, may."

"And if so," said my uncle, abruptly, speaking for the first time, — "if indeed it be for altar and hearth!" My father suddenly drew in and pished a little, for he saw that he was caught in the web of his own eloquence.

Then Roland took down from the wall his son's sword. Stealing to the cradle, he laid it in its sheath by the infant's side, and glanced from my father to us with a beseeching eye. Instinctively Blanche bent over the cradle, as if to protect the *Neogilos*; but the child, waking, turned from her, and attracted by the glitter of the hilt, laid one hand lustily thereon, and pointed with the other, laughingly, to Roland.

"Only on my uncle's proviso," said I, hesitatingly. "For hearth and altar, — nothing less!"

"And even in that case," said my father, "add the shield to the sword!" and on the other side of the infant he placed Roland's well-worn Bible, blistered in many a page with secret tears.

There we all stood, grouping round the young centre of so many hopes and fears, in peace or in war, born alike for the Battle of Life. And he, unconscious of all that made our lips silent and our eyes dim, had already left that bright bauble of the sword and thrown both arms round Roland's bended neck.

"*Herbert!*" murmured Roland; and Blanche gently drew away the sword — and left the Bible.

**ZICCI.**



# ZICCL A TALE.

---

## BOOK I.

### CHAPTER I.

IN the gardens at Naples, one summer evening in the last century, some four or five gentlemen were seated under a tree drinking their sherbet and listening, in the intervals of conversation, to the music which enlivened that gay and favorite resort of an indolent population. One of this little party was a young Englishman who had been the life of the whole group, but who for the last few moments had sunk into a gloomy and abstracted revery. One of his countrymen observed this sudden gloom, and tapping him on the back, said, "Glyndon, why, what ails you? Are you ill? You have grown quite pale; you tremble: is it a sudden chill? You had better go home; these Italian nights are often dangerous to our English constitutions."

"No, I am well now, — it was but a passing shudder; I cannot account for it myself."

A man apparently of about thirty years of age, and of a mien and countenance strikingly superior to those around him, turned abruptly, and looked steadfastly at Glyndon.

"I think I understand what you mean," said he, — "and perhaps," he added, with a grave smile, "I could explain it better than yourself." Here, turning to the others, he added, "You must often have felt, gentlemen, — each and all of you, — especially when sitting alone at night, a strange and unac-

countable sensation of coldness and awe creep over you ; your blood curdles, and the heart stands still ; the limbs shiver, the hair bristles ; you are afraid to look up, to turn your eyes to the darker corners of the room ; you have a horrible fancy that something unearthly is at hand. Presently the whole spell, if I may so call it, passes away, and you are ready to laugh at your own weakness. Have you not often felt what I have thus imperfectly described ? If so, you can understand what our young friend has just experienced, even amidst the delights of this magical scene, and amidst the balmy whispers of a July night."

"Sir," replied Glyndon, evidently much surprised, "you have defined exactly the nature of that shudder which came over me. But how could my manner be so faithful an index to my impressions ?"

"I know the signs of the visitation," returned the stranger, gravely ; "they are not to be mistaken by one of my experience."

All the gentlemen present then declared that they could comprehend, and had felt, what the stranger had described.

"According to one of our national superstitions," said Merton, the Englishman who had first addressed Glyndon, "the moment you so feel your blood creep, and your hair stand on end, some one is walking over the spot which shall be your grave."

"There are in all lands different superstitions to account for so common an occurrence," replied the stranger ; "one sect among the Arabians hold that at that instant God is deciding the hour either of your death or that of some one dear to you. The African savage, whose imagination is darkened by the hideous rites of his gloomy idolatry, believes that the Evil Spirit is pulling you towards him by the hair. So do the Grotesque and the Terrible mingle with each other."

"It is evidently a mere physical accident,—a derangement of the stomach ; a chill of the blood," said a young Neapolitan.

"Then why is it always coupled, in all nations, with some superstitious presentiment or terror,—some connection be-

tween the material frame and the supposed world without us ?" asked the stranger. "For my part, I think —"

"What do you think, sir ?" asked Glyndon, curiously.

"I think," continued the stranger, "that it is the repugnance and horror of that which is human about us to something indeed invisible, but antipathetic to our own nature, and from a knowledge of which we are happily secured by the imperfection of our senses."

"You are a believer in spirits, then ?" asked Merton, with an incredulous smile.

"Nay, I said not so. I can form no notion of a spirit, as the metaphysicians do, and certainly have no fear of one; but there may be forms of matter as invisible and impalpable to us as the animalculæ to which I have compared them. The monster that lives and dies in a drop of water, carnivorous, insatiable, subsisting on the creatures minuter than himself, is not less deadly in his wrath, less ferocious in his nature, than the tiger of the desert. There may be things around us malignant and hostile to men, if Providence had not placed a wall between them and us, merely by different modifications of matter."

"And could that wall never be removed ?" asked young Glyndon, abruptly. "Are the traditions of sorcerer and wizard, universal and immemorial as they are, merely fables ?"

"Perhaps yes; perhaps no," answered the stranger, indifferently. "But who, in an age in which the reason has chosen its proper bounds, would be mad enough to break the partition that divides him from the boa and the lion, to repine at and rebel against the law of nature which confines the shark to the great deep ? Enough of these idle speculations."

Here the stranger rose, summoned the attendant, paid for his sherbet, and, bowing slightly to the company, soon disappeared among the trees.

"Who is that gentleman ?" asked Glyndon, eagerly.

The rest looked at each other, without replying, for some moments.

"I never saw him before," said Merton, at last.

"Nor I."

"Nor I."

"I have met him often," said the Neapolitan, who was named Count Cetoxa; "it was, if you remember, as my companion that he joined you. He has been some months at Naples; he is very rich,—indeed enormously so. Our acquaintance commenced in a strange way."

"How was it?"

"I had been playing at a public gaming-house, and had lost considerably. I rose from the table, resolved no longer to tempt Fortune, when this gentleman, who had hitherto been a spectator, laying his hand on my arm, said with politeness, 'Sir, I see you enjoy play,—I dislike it; but I yet wish to have some interest in what is going on. Will you play this sum for me? The risk is mine,—the half-profits yours.' I was startled, as you may suppose, at such an address; but the stranger had an air and tone with him it was impossible to resist. Besides, I was burning to recover my losses, and should not have risen had I had any money left about me. I told him I would accept his offer, provided we shared the risk as well as profits. 'As you will,' said he, smiling, 'we need have no scruple, for you will be sure to win.' I sat down, the stranger stood behind me; my luck rose, I invariably won. In fact, I rose from the table a rich man."

"There can be no foul play at the public tables, especially when foul play would make against the bank."

"Certainly not," replied the count. "But our good fortune was indeed marvellous,—so extraordinary that a Sicilian (the Sicilians are all ill-bred, bad-tempered fellows) grew angry and insolent. 'Sir,' said he, turning to my new friend, 'you have no business to stand so near to the table. I do not understand this; you have not acted fairly.' The spectator replied, with great composure, that he had done nothing against the rules; that he was very sorry that one man could not win without another man losing; and that he could not act unfairly even if disposed to do so. The Sicilian took the stranger's mildness for apprehension, blustered more loudly, and at length fairly challenged him. 'I never seek a quarrel, and I never shun a danger,' returned my partner; and six or seven of us adjourned



to the garden behind the house. I was of course my partner's second. He took me aside. 'This man will die,' said he; 'see that he is buried privately in the church of St. Januario, by the side of his father.'

"Did you know his family?" I asked with great surprise. He made no answer, but drew his sword and walked deliberately to the spot we had selected. The Sicilian was a renowned swordsman; nevertheless, in the third pass he was run through the body. I went up to him; he could scarcely speak. 'Have you any request to make,—any affairs to settle?' He shook his head. 'Where would you wish to be interred?' He pointed towards the Sicilian coast. 'What!' said I, in surprise, 'not by the side of your father?' As I spoke, his face altered terribly, he uttered a piercing shriek; the blood gushed from his mouth, and he fell dead. The most strange part of the story is to come. We buried him in the church of St. Januario. In doing so, we took up his father's coffin; the lid came off in moving it, and the skeleton was visible. In the hollow of the skull we found a very slender wire of sharp steel; this caused great surprise and inquiry. The father, who was rich and a miser, had died suddenly and been buried in haste, owing, it was said, to the heat of the weather. Suspicion once awakened, the examination became minute. The old man's servant was questioned, and at last confessed that the son had murdered the sire. The contrivance was ingenious; the wire was so slender that it pierced to the brain and drew but one drop of blood, which the gray hairs concealed. The accomplice was executed."

"And this stranger, did he give evidence? Did he account for —"

"No," interrupted the count, "he declared that he had by accident visited the church that morning; that he had observed the tombstone of the Count Salvolio; that his guide had told him the count's son was in Naples,—a spendthrift and a gambler. While we were at play, he had heard the count mentioned by name at the table; and when the challenge was given and accepted, it had occurred to him to name the place of burial, by an instinct he could not account for."

"A very lame story," said Merton.

"Yes, but we Italians are superstitious. The alleged instinct was regarded as the whisper of Providence; the stranger became an object of universal interest and curiosity. His wealth, his manner of living, his extraordinary personal beauty, have assisted also to make him the rage."

"What is his name?" asked Glyndon.

"Zicci. Signor Zicci."

"Is it not an Italian name? He speaks English like a native."

"So he does French and German, as well as Italian, to my knowledge. But he declares himself a Corsican by birth, though I cannot hear of any eminent Corsican family of that name. However, what matters his birth or parentage? He is rich, generous, and the best swordsman I ever saw in my life. Who would affront him?"

"Not I, certainly," said Merton, rising. "Come, Glyndon, shall we seek our hotel? It is almost daylight. Adieu, signor."

"What think you of this story?" said Glyndon as the young men walked homeward.

"Why, it is very clear that this Zicci is some impostor, some clever rogue; and the Neapolitan shares booty, and puffs him off with all the hackneyed charlatanism of the marvellous. An unknown adventurer gets into society by being made an object of awe and curiosity; he is devilish handsome; and the women are quite content to receive him without any other recommendation than his own face and Cetoxa's fables."

"I cannot agree with you. Cetoxa, though a gambler and a rake, is a nobleman of birth and high repute for courage and honor. Besides, this stranger, with his grand features and lofty air,—so calm, so unobtrusive,—has nothing in common with the forward garrulity of an impostor."

"My dear Glyndon, pardon me, but you have not yet acquired any knowledge of the world; the stranger makes the best of a fine person, and his *grand air* is but a trick of the trade. But to change the subject: how gets on the love affair?"

"Oh! Isabel could not see me to-night. The old woman gave me a note of excuse."

"You must not marry her; what would they all say at home?"

"Let us enjoy the present," said Glyndon, with vivacity; "we are young, rich, good-looking: let us not think of to-morrow."

"Bravo, Glyndon! Here we are at the hotel. Sleep sound, and don't dream of Signor Zicci."



## CHAPTER II.

CLARENCE GLYNDON was a young man of small but independent fortune. He had, early in life, evinced considerable promise in the art of painting, and rather from enthusiasm than the want of a profession, he had resolved to devote himself to a career which in England has been seldom entered upon by persons who can live on their own means. Without being a poet, Glyndon had also manifested a graceful faculty for verse, which had contributed to win his entry into society above his birth. Spoiled and flattered from his youth upward, his natural talents were in some measure relaxed by indolence and that worldly and selfish habit of thought which frivolous companionship often engenders, and which is withering alike to stern virtue and high genius. The luxuriance of his fancy was unabated; but the affections, which are the life of fancy, had grown languid and inactive. His youth, his vanity, and a restless daring and thirst of adventure had from time to time involved him in dangers and dilemmas, out of which, of late, he had always extricated himself with the ingenious felicity of a clever head and cool heart. He had left England for Rome with the avowed purpose and sincere resolution of studying the divine masterpieces of art; but pleasure had soon

allured him from ambition, and he quitted the gloomy palaces of Rome for the gay shores and animated revelries of Naples. Here he had fallen in love—deeply in love, as he said and thought—with a young person celebrated at Naples, Isabel di Pisani. She was the only daughter of an Italian by an English mother. The father had known better days; in his prosperity he had travelled, and won in England the affections of a lady of some fortune. He had been induced to speculate; he lost his all; he settled at Naples, and taught languages and music. His wife died when Isabel, christened from her mother, was ten years old. At sixteen she came out on the stage; two years afterwards her father departed this life, and Isabel was an orphan.

Glyndon, a man of pleasure and a regular attendant at the theatre, had remarked the young actress behind the scenes; he fell in love with her, and he told her so. The girl listened to him, perhaps from vanity, perhaps from ambition, perhaps from coquetry; she listened, and allowed but few stolen interviews, in which she permitted no favor to the Englishman: it was one reason why he loved her so much.

The day following that on which our story opens, Glyndon was riding alone by the shores of the Neapolitan sea, on the other side of the Cavern of Pausilippo. It was past noon; the sun had lost its early fervor, and a cool breeze sprang voluptuously from the sparkling sea. Bending over a fragment of stone near the roadside, he perceived the form of a man; and when he approached he recognized Zicci.

The Englishman saluted him courteously. "Have you discovered some antique?" said he, with a smile; "they are as common as pebbles on this road."

"No," replied Zicci; "it was but one of those antiques that have their date, indeed, from the beginning of the world, but which Nature eternally withers and renews." So saying, he showed Glyndon a small herb with a pale blue flower, and then placed it carefully in his bosom.

"You are an herbalist?"

"I am."

"It is, I am told, a study full of interest."

"To those who understand it, doubtless. But," continued Zicci, looking up with a slight and cold smile, "why do you linger on your way to converse with me on matters in which you neither have knowledge nor desire to obtain it? I read your heart, young Englishman: your curiosity is excited; you wish to know *me*, and not this humble herb. Pass on; your desire never can be satisfied."

"You have not the politeness of your countrymen," said Glyndon, somewhat discomposed. "Suppose I were desirous to cultivate your acquaintance, why should you reject my advances?"

"I reject no man's advances," answered Zicci. "I must know them, if they so desire; but *me*, in return, they can never comprehend. If you ask my acquaintance, it is yours; but I would warn you to shun me."

"And why are you then so dangerous?"

"Some have found me so; if I were to predict your fortune by the vain calculations of the astrologer, I should tell you, in their despicable jargon, that my planet sat darkly in your house of life. Cross me not, if you can avoid it. I warn you now for the first time and last."

"You despise the astrologers, yet you utter a jargon as mysterious as theirs. I neither gamble nor quarrel: why then should I fear you?"

"As you will; I have done."

"Let me speak frankly: your conversation last night interested and amused me."

"I know it; minds like yours are attracted by mystery."

Glyndon was piqued at those words, though in the tone in which they were spoken there was no contempt.

"I see you do not consider me worthy of your friendship: be it so. Good day."

Zicci coldly replied to the salutation, and as the Englishman rode on, returned to his botanical employment.

The same night Glyndon went, as usual, to the theatre. He was standing behind the scenes watching Isabel, who was on the stage in one of her most brilliant parts. The house resounded with applause. Glyndon was transported with a

young man's passion and a young man's pride. "This glorious creature," thought he, "may yet be mine."

He felt, while thus rapt in delicious revery, a slight touch upon his shoulder; he turned, and beheld Zicci. "You are in danger," said the latter. "Do not walk home to-night; or if you do, go not alone."

Before Glyndon recovered from his surprise, Zicci disappeared; and when the Englishman saw him again, he was in the box of one of the Neapolitan ministers, where Glyndon could not follow him.

Isabel now left the stage, and Glyndon accosted her with impassioned gallantry. The actress was surprisingly beautiful; of fair complexion and golden hair, her countenance was relieved from the tame and gentle loveliness which the Italians suppose to be the characteristics of English beauty, by the contrast of dark eyes and lashes, by a forehead of great height, to which the dark outline of the eyebrows gave something of majesty and command. In spite of the slightness of virgin youth, her proportions had the nobleness, blent with the delicacy, that belongs to the masterpieces of ancient sculpture; and there was a conscious pride in her step, and in the swanlike bend of her stately head, as she turned with an evident impatience from the address of her lover. Taking aside an old woman, who was her constant and confidential attendant at the theatre, she said, in an earnest whisper, —

"Oh, Gionetta, he is here again! I have seen him again! And again, he alone of the whole theatre withholds from me his applause. He scarcely seems to notice me; his indifference mortifies me to the soul, — I could weep for rage and sorrow."

"Which is he, my darling?" said the old woman, with fondness in her voice. "He must be dull, — not worth thy thoughts."

The actress drew Gionetta nearer to the stage, and pointed out to her a man in one of the nearer boxes, conspicuous amongst all else by the simplicity of his dress and the extraordinary beauty of his features.

"Not worth a thought, Gionetta," repeated Isabel, — "not worth a thought! Saw you ever one so noble, so godlike?"

"By the Holy Mother!" answered Gionetta, "he is a proper man, and has the air of a prince."

The prompter summoned the Signora Pisani. "Find out his name, Gionetta," said she, sweeping on to the stage, and passing by Glyndon, who gazed at her with a look of sorrowful reproach.

The scene on which the actress now entered was that of the final catastrophe, wherein all her remarkable powers of voice and art were pre-eminently called forth. The house hung on every word with breathless worship, but the eyes of Isabel sought only those of one calm and unmoved spectator; she exerted herself as if inspired. The stranger listened, and observed her with an attentive gaze, but no approval escaped his lips, no emotion changed the expression of his cold and half-disdainful aspect. Isabel, who was in the character of a jealous and abandoned mistress, never felt so acutely the part she played. Her tears were truthful; her passion that of nature: it was almost too terrible to behold. She was borne from the stage, exhausted and insensible, amidst such a tempest of admiring rapture as Continental audiences alone can raise. The crowd stood up, handkerchiefs waved, garlands and flowers were thrown on the stage, men wiped their eyes, and women sobbed aloud.

"By heavens!" said a Neapolitan of great rank, "she has fired me beyond endurance. To-night, this very night, she shall be mine! You have arranged all, Mascari?"

"All, signor. And if this young Englishman should accompany her home?"

"The presuming barbarian! At all events let him bleed for his folly. I hear that she admits him to secret interviews. I will have no rival."

"But an Englishman! There is always a search after the bodies of the English."

"Fool! Is not the sea deep enough, or the earth secret enough, to hide one dead man? Our ruffians are silent as the grave itself. And I, — who would dare to suspect, to

arraign, the Prince di —— ? See to it, — let him be watched, and the fitting occasion taken. I trust him to you, — robbers murder him ; you understand : the country swarms with them. Plunder and strip him. Take three men ; the rest shall be my escort.”

Mascari shrugged his shoulders, and bowed submissively.

Meanwhile Glyndon besought Isabel, who recovered but slowly, to return home in his carriage.<sup>1</sup> She had done so once or twice before, though she had never permitted him to accompany her. This time she refused, and with some petulance. Glyndon, offended, was retiring sullenly, when Gionetta stopped him. Stay, signor,” said she, coaxingly, “the dear signora is not well : do not be angry with her ; I will make her accept your offer.”

Glyndon stayed, and after a few moments spent in expostulation on the part of Gionetta, and resistance on that of Isabel, the offer was accepted ; the actress, with a mixture of *naïveté* and coquetry, gave her hand to her lover, who kissed it with delight. Gionetta and her charge entered the carriage, and Glyndon was left at the door of the theatre, to return home on foot. The mysterious warning of Zicci then suddenly occurred to him ; he had forgotten it in the interest of his lover’s quarrel with Isabel. He thought it now advisable to guard against danger foretold by lips so mysterious ; he looked round for some one he knew. The theatre was disgorging its crowds, who hustled and jostled and pressed upon him ; but he recognized no familiar countenances. While pausing irresolute, he heard Merton’s voice calling on him, and to his great relief discovered his friend making his way through the throng.

“I have secured you a place in the Count Cetoxa’s carriage,” said he. “Come along, he is waiting for us.”

“How kind in you ! How did you find me out ?”

“I met Zicci in the passage. ‘Your friend is at the door of the theatre,’ said he ; ‘do not let him go home alone to-night : the streets of Naples are not always safe.’ I immediately

<sup>1</sup> At that time in Naples carriages were both cheaper to hire, and more necessary for strangers, than they are now.



remembered that some of the Calabrian bravos had been busy within the city the last few weeks, and asked Cetora, who was with me, to accompany you."

Further explanation was forbidden, for they now joined the count. As Glyndon entered the carriage and drew up the glass, he saw four men standing apart by the pavement, who seemed to eye him with attention.

"*Cospetto!*" cried one; "*ecco Inglese!*" Glyndon imperfectly heard the exclamation as the carriage drove on. He reached home in safety.

"Have you discovered who he is?" asked the actress, as she was now alone in the carriage with Gionetta.

"Yes, he is the celebrated Signor Zicci, about whom the court has run mad. They say he is so rich,—oh, so much richer than any of the Inglese! But a bird in the hand, my angel, is better than —"

"Cease," interrupted the young actress. "Zioci! Speak of the Englishman no more."

The carriage was now entering that more lonely and remote part of the city in which Isabel's house was situated, when it suddenly stopped.

Gionetta, in alarm, thrust her head out of window, and perceived by the pale light of the moon that the driver, torn from his seat, was already pinioned in the arms of two men; the next moment the door was opened violently, and a tall figure, masked and mantled, appeared.

"Fear not, fairest Pisani," said he, gently, "no ill shall befall you." As he spoke, he wound his arms round the form of the fair actress, and endeavored to lift her from the carriage. But the Signora Pisani was not an ordinary person; she had been before exposed to all the dangers to which the beauty of the low-born was subjected amongst a lawless and profligate nobility. She thrust back the assailant with a power that surprised him, and in the next moment the blade of a dagger gleamed before his eyes. "Touch me," said she, drawing herself to the farther end of the carriage, "and I strike!"

The mask drew back.

"By the body of Bacchus, a bold spirit!" said he, half

laughing and half alarmed. "Here, Luigi, Giovanni! disarm and seize her. Harm her not."

The mask retired from the door, and another and yet taller form presented itself. "Be calm, Isabel di Pisani," said he, in a low voice; "with me you are indeed safe!" He lifted his mask as he spoke, and showed the noble features of Zicci. "Be calm, be hushed; I can save you." He vanished, leaving Isabel lost in surprise, agitation, and delight. There were in all nine masks: two were engaged with the driver; one stood at the head of the carriage-horses; a third guarded the well-trained steeds of the party; three others, besides Zicci and the one who had first accosted Isabel, stood apart by a carriage drawn to the side of the road. To these Zicci motioned: they advanced; he pointed towards the first mask, who was in fact the Prince di —, and to his unspeakable astonishment the Prince was suddenly seized from behind.

"Treason," he cried, "treason among my own men! What means this?"

"Place him in his carriage. If he resist, shoot him!" said Zicci, calmly.

He approached the men who had detained the coachman.

"You are outnumbered and outwitted," said he. "Join your lord: you are three men, — we six, armed to the teeth. Thank our mercy that we spare your lives. Go!"

The men gave way, dismayed. The driver remounted.

"Cut the traces of their carriage and the bridles of their horses," said Zicci, as he entered the vehicle containing Isabel, and which now drove on rapidly, leaving the discomfited ravisher in a state of rage and stupor impossible to describe.

"Allow me to explain this mystery to you," said Zicci. "I discovered the plot against you, — no matter how. I frustrated it thus: the head of this design is a nobleman who has long persecuted you in vain. He and two of his creatures watched you from the entrance of the theatre, having directed six others to await him on the spot where you were attacked; myself and five of my servants supplied their place, and were mistaken for his own followers. I had previously ridden alone to the

spot where the men were waiting, and informed them that their master would not require their services that night. They believed me, for I showed them his signet-ring, and accordingly dispersed; I then joined my own band, whom I had left in the rear. You know all. We are at your door."

---

### CHAPTER III.

Zicci was left alone with the young Italian. She had thrown aside her cloak and head-gear; her hair, somewhat dishevelled, fell down her ivory neck, which the dress partially displayed; she seemed, as she sat in that low and humble chamber, a very vision of light and glory.

Zicci gazed at her with an admiration mingled with compassion; he muttered a few words to himself, and then addressed her aloud:—

"Isabel di Pisani, I have saved you from a great peril, — not from dishonor only, but perhaps from death. The Prince di —, under the weak government of a royal child and a venal administration, is a man above the law. He is capable of every crime; but amongst his passions he has such prudence as belongs to ambition: if you were not to reconcile yourself to your shame, you would never enter the world again to tell your tale. The ravisher has no heart for repentance, but he has a hand that can murder. I have saved thee, Isabel di Pisani. Perhaps you would ask me wherefore?" Zicci paused, and smiled mournfully as he added: "My life is not that of others, but I am still human, — I know pity; and more, Isabel, I can feel gratitude for affection. You love me; it was my fate to fascinate your eye, to arouse your vanity, to inflame your imagination. It was to warn you from this folly that I consented for a few minutes to become your guest. The Englishman, Glyndon, loves thee well, — better than I can ever love; he

may wed thee, he may bear thee to his own free and happy land, — the land of thy mother's kin. Forget me, teach thyself to return and to deserve his love; and I tell thee that thou wilt be honored and be happy."

Isabel listened with silent wonder and deep blushes to this strange address; and when the voice ceased, she covered her face with her hands and wept.

Zicci rose. "I have fulfilled my duty to you, and I depart. Remember that you are still in danger from the prince; be wary, and be cautious. Your best precaution is in flight; farewell."

"Oh, do not leave me yet! You have read a secret of which I myself was scarcely conscious: you despise me, — you, my preserver! Ah! do not misjudge me; I am better, higher than I seem. Since I saw thee I have been a new being." The poor girl clasped her hands passionately as she spoke, and her tears streamed down her cheeks.

"What would you that I should answer?" said Zicci, pausing, but with a cold severity in his eye.

"Say that you do not despise, — say that you do not think me light and shameless."

"Willingly, Isabel. I know your heart and your history: you are capable of great virtues; you have the seeds of a rare and powerful genius. You may pass through the brief period of your human life with a proud step and a cheerful heart, if you listen to my advice. You have been neglected from your childhood; you have been thrown among nations at once frivolous and coarse; your nobler dispositions, your higher qualities, are not developed. You were pleased with the admiration of Glyndon; you thought that the passionate stranger might marry you, while others had only uttered the vows that dishonor. Poor child, it was the instinctive desire of right within thee that made thee listen to him; and if my fatal shadow had not crossed thy path, thou wouldst have loved him well enough, at least, for content. Return to that hope, and nurse again that innocent affection: this is my answer to thee. Art thou contented?"

"No! ah, no! Severe as thou art, I love better to hear thee

than, than — What am I saying ? And now you have saved me, I shall pray for you, bless you, think of you ; and am I never to see you more ? Alas ! the moment you leave me, danger and dread will darken round me. Let me be your servant, your slave ; with you I should have no fear."

A dark shade fell over Zicci's brow ; he looked from the ground, on which his eyes had rested while she spoke, upon the earnest and imploring face of the beautiful creature that now knelt before him, with all the passions of an ardent and pure, but wholly untutored and half-savage, nature speaking from the tearful eyes and trembling lips. He looked at her with an aspect she could not interpret ; in his eyes were kindness, sorrow, and even something, she thought, of love : yet the brow frowned, and the lip was stern.

"It is in vain that we struggle with our doom," said he, calmly ; "listen to me yet. I am a man, Isabel, in whom there are some good impulses yet left, but whose life is, on the whole, devoted to a systematic and selfish desire to enjoy whatever life can afford. To me it is given to warn : the warning neglected, I interfere no more ; I leave her victories to that Fate that I cannot baffle of her prey. You do not understand me ; no matter : what I am now about to say will be more easy to comprehend. I tell thee to tear from thy heart all thought of me : thou hast yet the power. If thou wilt not obey me, thou must reap the seeds that thou wilt sow. Glyndon, if thou acceptest his homage, will love thee throughout life ; I, too, can love thee."

"You, you —"

"But with a lukewarm and selfish love, and one that cannot last. Thou wilt be a flower in my path ; I inhale thy sweetness and pass on, caring not what wind shall sup thee, or what step shall tread thee to the dust. Which is the love thou wouldst prefer ?"

"But do you, can you love me, — you, you, Zicci, — even for an hour ? Say it again."

"Yes, Isabel ; I am not dead to beauty, and yours is that rarely given to the daughters of men. Yes, Isabel, I could love thee."

. Isabel uttered a cry of joy, seized his hand, and kissed it through burning and impassioned tears. Zicci raised her in his arms and imprinted one kiss upon her forehead.

"Do not deceive thyself," he said; "consider well. I tell thee again that my love is subjected to the certain curse of change. For my part, I shall seek thee no more. Thy fate shall be thine own, and not mine. For the rest, fear not the Prince di——. At *present*, I can save thee from every harm."

With these words he withdrew himself from her embrace, and had gained the outer door just as Gionetta came from the kitchen with her hands full of such cheer as she had managed to collect together. Zicci laid his hand on the old woman's arm.

"Signor Glyndon," said he, "loves Isabel; he may wed her. You love your mistress: plead for him. Disabuse her, if you can, of any caprice for me. I am a bird ever on the wing."

He dropped a purse, heavy with gold, into Gionetta's bosom, and was gone.



## CHAPTER IV.

THE palace of Zicci was among the noblest in Naples. It still stands, though ruined and dismantled, in one of those antique streets from which the old races of the Norman and the Spaniard have long since vanished.

He ascended the vast staircase, and entered the rooms reserved for his private hours. They were no wise remarkable except for their luxury and splendor, and the absence of what men so learned as Zicci was reputed, generally prize, namely, books. Zicci seemed to know everything that books can teach; yet of books themselves he spoke and thought with the most profound contempt.

He threw himself on a sofa, and dismissed his attendants for the night; and here it may be observed that Zicci had no

one servant who knew anything of his origin, birth, or history. Some of his attendants he had brought with him from other cities; the rest he had engaged at Naples. He hired those only whom wealth can make subservient. His expenditure was most lavish, his generosity, regal; but his orders were ever given as those of a general to his army. The least disobedience, the least hesitation, and the offender was at once dismissed. He was a man who sought tools, and never made confidants.

Zicci remained for a considerable time motionless and thoughtful. The hand of the clock before him pointed to the first hour of morning. The solemn voice of the time-piece aroused him from his revery.

"One sand more out of the mighty hour-glass," said he, rising; "one hour nearer to the last! I am weary of humanity. I will enter into one of the countless worlds around me." He lifted the arras that clothed the walls, and touching a strong iron door (then made visible) with a minute key which he wore in a ring, passed into an inner apartment lighted by a single lamp of extraordinary lustre. The room was small; a few phials and some dried herbs were ranged in shelves on the wall, which was hung with snow-white cloth of coarse texture. From the shelves Zicci selected one of the phials, and poured the contents into a crystal cup. The liquid was colorless, and sparkled rapidly up in bubbles of light; it almost seemed to evaporate ere it reached his lips. But when the strange beverage was quaffed, a sudden change was visible in the countenance of Zicci: his beauty became yet more dazzling, his eyes shone with intense fire, and his form seemed to grow more youthful and ethereal.

. . . . .

## CHAPTER V.

THE next day, Glyndon bent his steps towards Zicci's palace. The young man's imagination, naturally inflammable, was singularly excited by the little he had seen and heard of this strange being; a spell he could neither master nor account for, attracted him towards the stranger. Zicci's power seemed mysterious and great, his motives kindly and benevolent, yet his manners chilling and repellant. Why at one moment reject Glyndon's acquaintance, at another save him from danger? How had Zicci thus acquired the knowledge of enemies unknown to Glyndon himself? His interest was deeply roused, his gratitude appealed to; he resolved to make another effort to conciliate Zicci.

The signor was at home, and Glyndon was admitted into a lofty saloon, where in a few moments Zicci joined him.

"I am come to thank you for your warning last night," said he, "and to entreat you to complete my obligation by informing me of the quarter to which I may look for enmity and peril."

"You are a gallant, Mr. Glyndon," said Zicci, with a smile; "and do you know so little of the South as not to be aware that gallants have always rivals?"

"Are you serious?" said Glyndon, coloring.

"Most serious. You love Isabel di Pisani; you have for rival one of the most powerful and relentless of the Neapolitan princes. Your danger is indeed great."

"But, pardon me, how came it known to you?"

"I give no account of myself to mortal man," replied Zicci, haughtily; "and to me it matters not whether you regard or scorn my warning."

"Well, if I may not question you, be it so; but at least advise me what to do."



"You will not follow my advice."

"You wrong me! Why?"

"Because you are constitutionally brave; you are fond of excitement and mystery; you like to be the hero of a romance. I should advise you to leave Naples, and you will disdain to do so while Naples contains a foe to shun or a mistress to pursue."

"You are right," said the young Englishman, with energy; "and you cannot reproach me for such a resolution."

"No, there is another course left to you. Do you love Isabel di Pisani truly and fervently? If so, marry her, and take a bride to your native land."

"Nay," answered Glyndon, embarrassed. "Isabel is not of my rank; her character is strange and self-willed; her education neglected. I am enslaved by her beauty, but I cannot wed her."

Zicci frowned.

"Your love, then, is but selfish lust; and by that love you will be betrayed. Young man, Destiny is less inexorable than it appears. The resources of the great Ruler of the Universe are not so scanty and so stern as to deny to men the divine privilege of Free Will; all of us can carve out our own way, and God can make our very contradictions harmonize with His solemn ends. You have before you an option. Honorable and generous love may even now work out your happiness and effect your escape; a frantic and interested passion will but lead you to misery and doom."

"Do you pretend, then, to read the Future?"

"I have said all that it pleases me to utter."

"While you assume the moralist to me, Signor Zicci," said Glyndon, with a smile, "if report says true you do not yourself reject the allurements of unfettered love."

"If it were necessary that practice square with precept," said Zicci, with a sneer, "our pulpits would be empty. Do you think it matters, in the great aggregate of human destinies, what one man's *conduct* may be? Nothing,—not a grain of dust; but it matters much what are the *sentiments* he propagates. His acts are limited and momentary; his senti-

ments may pervade the universe, and inspire generations till the day of doom. All our virtues, all our laws, are drawn from books and maxims, which *are* sentiments, not from deeds. Our opinions, young Englishman, are the angel part of us; our acts the earthly."

"You have reflected deeply, for an Italian," said Glyndon.

"Who told you I was an Italian?"

"Are you not of Corsica?"

"Tush!" said Zicci, impatiently turning away. Then, after a pause, he resumed, in a mild voice: "Glyndon, do you renounce Isabel di Pisani? Will you take three days to consider of what I have said?"

"Renounce her, — never!"

"Then you will marry her?"

"Impossible."

"Be it so; she will then renounce you. I tell you that you have rivals."

"Yes, the Prince di ——; but I do not fear him."

"You have another, whom you will fear more."

"And who is he?"

"Myself."

Glyndon turned pale, and started from his seat.

"You, Signor Zicci, you, — and you dare to tell me so?"

"Dare! Alas! you know there is nothing on earth left me to fear!"

These words were not uttered arrogantly, but in a tone of the most mournful dejection. Glyndon was enraged, confounded, and yet awed. However, he had a brave English heart within his breast, and he recovered himself quickly.

"Signor," said he, calmly, "I am not to be duped by these solemn phrases and these mystical sympathies. You may have power which I cannot comprehend or emulate, or you may be but a keen impostor."

"Well, sir, your logical position is not ill-taken; proceed."

"I mean then," continued Glyndon, resolutely, though somewhat disconcerted, "I mean you to understand, that, though I am not to be persuaded or compelled by a stranger

to marry Isabel di Pisani, I am not the less determined never tamely to yield her to another."

Zicci looked gravely at the young man, whose sparkling eyes and heightened color testified the spirit to support his words, and replied: "So bold! well, it becomes you. You have courage, then; I thought it. Perhaps it may be put to a sharper test than you dream of. But take my advice: wait three days, and tell me then if you will marry this young person."

"But if you love her, why, why —"

"Why am I anxious that she should wed another? To save her from myself! Listen to me. That girl, humble and uneducated though she be, has in her the seeds of the most lofty qualities and virtues. She can be all to the man she loves,—all that man can desire in wife or mistress. Her soul, developed by affection, will elevate your own; it will influence your fortunes, exalt your destiny; you will become a great and prosperous man. If, on the contrary, she fall to me, I know not what may be her lot; but I know that few can pass the ordeal, and hitherto no woman has survived the struggle."

As Zicci spoke, his face became livid, and there was something in his voice that froze the warm blood of his listener.

"What is this mystery which surrounds you?" exclaimed Glyndon, unable to repress his emotion. "Are you, in truth, different from other men? Have you passed the boundary of lawful knowledge? Are you, as some declare, a sorcerer, only a —"

"Hush!" interrupted Zicci, gently, and with a smile of singular but melancholy sweetness: "have you earned the right to ask me these questions? The days of torture and persecution are over; and a man may live as he pleases, and talk as it suits him, without fear of the stake and the rack. Since I can defy persecution, pardon me if I do not succumb to curiosity."

Glyndon blushed, and rose. In spite of his love for Isabel, and his natural terror of such a rival, he felt himself irresistibly drawn towards the very man he had most cause to

suspect and dread. It was like the fascination of the basilisk. He held out his hand to Zicci, saying, "Well, then, if we are to be rivals, our swords must settle our rights; till then I would fain be friends."

"Friends! Pardon me, I like you too well to give you my friendship. You know not what you ask."

"Enigmas again!"

"Enigmas!" cried Zicci, passionately, "ay: can you dare to solve them! Would you brave all that human heart can conceive of peril and of horror, so that you at last might stand separated from this visible universe side by side with me? When you can dare this, and when you are fit to dare it, I may give you my right hand and call you friend."

"I could dare everything and all things for the attainment of superhuman wisdom," said Glyndon; and his countenance was lighted up with wild and intense enthusiasm.

Zicci observed him in thoughtful silence.

"He may be worthy," he muttered; "he may, yet —" He broke off abruptly; then, speaking aloud, "Go, Glyndon," said he; "in three days we shall meet again."

"Where?"

"Perhaps where you can least anticipate. In any case, we shall meet."

---

## CHAPTER VI.

GLYNDON thought seriously and deeply over all that the mysterious Zicci had said to him relative to Isabel. His imagination was inflamed by the vague and splendid promises that were connected with his marriage with the poor actress. His fears, too, were naturally aroused by the threat that by marriage alone could he save himself from the rivalry of Zicci, — Zicci, born to dazzle and command; Zicci, who united to the apparent wealth of a monarch the beauty of a god; Zicci,

whose eye seemed to foresee, whose hand to frustrate, every danger. What a rival, and what a foe!

But Glyndon's pride, as well as jealousy, was aroused. He was *brave comme son épée*. Should he shrink from the power or the enmity of a man mortal as himself? And why should Zicci desire him to give his name and station to one of a calling so equivocal? Might there not be motives he could not fathom? Might not the actress and the Corsican be in league with each other? Might not all this jargon of prophecy and menace be but artifices to dupe him, — the tool, perhaps, of a mountebank and his mistress! Mistress, — ah, no! If ever maidenhood wrote its modest characters externally, that pure eye, that noble forehead, that mien and manner so ingenuous even in their coquetry, their pride, assured him that Isabel was not the base and guilty thing he had dared for a moment to suspect her. Lost in a labyrinth of doubts and surmises, Glyndon turned on the practical sense of the sober Merton to assist and enlighten him.

As may be well supposed, his friend listened to his account of his interview with Zicci with a half-suppressed and ironical smile.

"Excellent, my dear friend! This Zicci is another Apollonius of Tyana, — nothing less will satisfy you. What! is it possible that you are the Clarence Glyndon of whose career such glowing hopes are entertained, — you the man whose genius has been extolled by all the graybeards? Not a boy turned out from a village school but would laugh you to scorn. And so because Signor Zicci tells you that you will be a marvelously great man if you revolt all your friends and blight all your prospects by marrying a Neapolitan actress, you begin already to think of — By Jupiter! I cannot talk patiently on the subject. Let the girl alone, — that would be the proper plan; or else —"

"You talk very sensibly," interrupted Glyndon, "but you distract me. I will go to Isabel's house; I will see her; I will judge for myself."

"That is certainly the best way to forget her," said Merton. Glyndon seized his hat and sword, and was gone.

## CHAPTER VII.

SHE was seated outside her door, the young actress. The sea, which in that heavenly bay literally seems to sleep in the arms of the shore, bounded the view in front; while to the right, not far off, rose the dark and tangled crags to which the traveller of to-day is daily brought to gaze on the tomb of Virgil, or compare with the Cavern of Pausilippo the archway of Highgate Hill. There were a few fishermen loitering by the cliffs, on which their nets were hung up to dry; and, at a distance, the sound of some rustic pipe (more common at that day than in this), mingled now and then with the bells of the lazy mules, broke the voluptuous silence,—the silence of declining noon on the shores of Naples. Never till you have enjoyed it, never till you have felt its enervating but delicious charm, believe that you can comprehend all the meaning of the *dolce far niente*; and when that luxury has been known, when you have breathed the atmosphere of fairy land, then you will no longer wonder why the heart ripens with so sudden and wild a power beneath the rosy skies and amidst the glorious foliage of the South.

The young actress was seated by the door of her house; overhead a rude canvas awning sheltered her from the sun; on her lap lay the manuscript of a new part in which she was shortly to appear. By her side was the guitar on which she had been practising the airs that were to ravish the ears of the *cognoscenti*. But the guitar had been thrown aside in despair; her voice this morning did not obey her will. The manuscript lay unheeded, and the eyes of the actress were fixed on the broad, blue deep beyond. In the unwonted negligence of her dress might be traced the abstraction of her mind. Her beautiful hair was gathered up loosely, and partially bandaged by a kerchief, whose purple color seemed to deepen the golden

hue of the tresses. A stray curl escaped, and fell down the graceful neck. A loose morning robe, girded by a sash, left the breeze that came ever and anon from the sea to die upon the bust half disclosed, and the tiny slipper, that Cinderella might have worn, seemed a world too wide for the tiny foot which it scarcely covered. It might be the heat of the day that deepened the soft bloom of the cheeks and gave an unwonted languor to the large dark eyes. In all the pomp of her stage attire, in all the flush of excitement before the intoxicating lamps, never had Isabel looked so lovely.

By the side of the actress, and filling up the threshold, stood Gionetta, with her hands thrust up to the elbow in two huge recesses on either side her gown, — pockets, indeed, they might be called by courtesy; such pockets as Beelzebub's grandmother might have shaped for herself, bottomless pits in miniature.

"But I assure you," said the nurse, in that sharp, quick, ear-splitting tone in which the old women of the South are more than a match for those of the North, — "but I assure you, my darling, that there is not a finer cavalier in all Naples, nor a more beautiful, than this *Inglese*; and I am told that all the *Inglese* are much richer than they seem. Though they have no trees in their country, poor people, and instead of twenty-four they have only twelve hours to the day, yet I hear, *cospetto*! that they shoe their horses with *scudi*; and since they cannot (the poor heretics!) turn grapes into wine, for they have no grapes, they turn gold into physic, and take a glass or two of *pistoles* whenever they are troubled with the colic. But you don't hear me! Little pupil of my eyes, you don't hear me!"

"Gionetta, is he not god-like?"

"*Sancta Maria*! he is handsome, *bellissimo*; and when you are his wife, — for they say these English are never satisfied unless they marry —"

"Wife! English! Whom are you talking of?"

"Why, the young English signor, to be sure."

"Chut! I thought you spoke of Zicci."

"Oh! Signor Zicci is very rich and very generous; but he

wants to be your cavalier, not your husband. I see that, — leave me alone. When you are married, then you will see how amiable Signor Zicci will be. Oh, *per fede!* but he will be as close to your husband as the yolk to the white; that he will."

"Silence, Gionetta! How wretched I am to have no one else to speak to — to advise me. Oh, beautiful sun!" and the girl pressed her hand to her heart with wild energy, "why do you light every spot but *this*? Dark, dark! And a little while ago I was so calm, so innocent, so gay. I did not hate you then, Gionetta, hateful as your talk was; I hate you now. Go in; leave me alone — leave me."

"And indeed it is time I should leave you, for the *polenta* will be spoiled, and you have eaten nothing all day. If you don't eat you will lose your beauty, my darling, and then nobody will care for you. Nobody cares for us when we grow ugly, — I know that; and then you must, like old Gionetta, get some Isabel of your own to spoil. I'll go and see to the *polenta*."

"Since I have known this man," said the actress, half aloud, "since his dark eyes have fascinated me, I am no longer the same. I long to escape from myself, — to glide with the sun-beam over the hill-tops; to become something that is not of earth. Is it, indeed, that he is a sorcerer, as I have heard? Phantoms float before me at night, and a fluttering like the wing of a bird within my heart seems as if the spirit were terrified, and would break its cage."

While murmuring these incoherent rhapsodies, a step that she did not hear approached the actress, and a light hand touched her arm.

"Isabella! *carissima*! Isabella!"

She turned, and saw Glyndon. The sight of his fair young face calmed her at once. She did not love him, yet his sight gave her pleasure. She had for him a kind and grateful feeling. Ah, if she had never beheld Zicci!

"Isabel," said the Englishman, drawing her again to the bench from which she had risen, and seating himself beside her, "you know how passionately I love thee. Hitherto thou



hast played with my impatience and my ardor, thou hast sometimes smiled, sometimes frowned away my importunities for a reply to my suit; but this day — I know not how it is — I feel a more sustained and settled courage to address thee, and learn the happiest or the worst. I have rivals, I know, — rivals who are more powerful than the poor artist. Are they also more favored?"

Isabel blushed faintly, but her countenance was grave and distressed. Looking down, and marking some hieroglyphical figures in the dust with the point of her slipper, she said, with some hesitation and a vain attempt to be gay, "Signor, whoever wastes his thoughts on an actress must submit to have rivals. It is our unhappy destiny not to be sacred even to ourselves."

"But you have told me, Isabel, that you do not love this destiny, glittering though it seem, — that your heart is not in the vocation which your talents adorn."

"Ah, no!" said the actress, her eyes filling with tears, "it is a miserable lot to be slave to a multitude."

"Fly then with me," said the artist, passionately. "Quit forever the calling that divides that heart I would have all my own. Share my fate now and forever, — my pride, my delight, my ideal! Thou shalt inspire my canvas and my song, thy beauty shall be made at once holy and renowned. In the galleries of princes crowds shall gather round the effigy of a Venus or a saint, and a whisper shall break forth, 'It is Isabel di Pisani!' Ah! Isabel, I adore thee: tell me that I do not worship in vain."

"Thou art good and fair," said Isabel, gazing on her lover as he pressed his cheek nearer to hers, and clasped her hand in his. "But what should I give thee in return?"

"Love, love; only love!"

"A sister's love?"

"Ah, speak not with such cruel coldness!"

"It is all I have for thee. Listen to me, signor. When I look on your face, when I hear your voice, a certain serene and tranquil calm creeps over and lulls thoughts, oh, how feverish, how wild! When thou art gone, the day seems a shade more

dark; but the shadow soon flies. I miss thee not, I think not of thee, — no, I love thee not; and I will give myself only where I love.”

“But I would teach thee to love me, — fear it not. Nay, such love as thou now describest in our tranquil climates is the love of innocence and youth.”

“And it is the innocence he would destroy,” said Isabel, rather to herself than to him.

Glyndon drew back, conscience-stricken.

“No, it may not be!” she said, rising, and extricating her hand gently from his grasp. “Leave me, and forget me. You do not understand, you could not comprehend, the nature of her whom you think to love. From my childhood upward, I have felt as if I were marked out for some strange and preternatural doom; as if I were singled from my kind. This feeling (and, oh! at times it is one of delirious and vague delight, at others of the darkest gloom) deepens with me day by day. It is like the shadow of twilight, spreading slowly and solemnly round. My hour approaches; a little while, and it will be night!”

As she spoke, Glyndon listened with visible emotion and perturbation. “Isabel!” he exclaimed, as she ceased, “your words more than ever enchain me to you. As you feel, I feel. I, too, have been ever haunted with a chill and unearthly foreboding. Amidst the crowds of men I have felt alone. In all my pleasures, my toils, my pursuits, a warning voice has murmured in my ear, ‘Time has a dark mystery in store for thy manhood.’ When you spoke it was as the voice of my own soul.”

Isabel gazed upon him in wonder and fear. Her countenance was as white as marble, and those features, so divine in their rare symmetry, might have served the Greek with a study for the Pythoness when, from the mystic cavern and the bubbling spring, she first hears the voice of the inspiring god. Gradually the rigor and tension of that wonderful face relaxed, the color returned, the pulse beat, the heart animated the frame.

“Tell me,” she said, turning partially aside, “tell me, have

you seen, do you know, a stranger in this city, — one of whom wild stories are afloat ? ”

“ You speak of Zicci. I have seen him ; I know him ! And you ? Ah ! he, too, would be my rival, — he, too, would bear thee from me ! ”

“ You err,” said Isabel, hastily and with a deep sigh, — “ he pleads for you ; he informed me of your love ; he besought me not — not to reject it.”

“ Strange being, incomprehensible enigma, why did you name him ? ”

“ Why ? Ah ! I would have asked whether, when you first saw him, the foreboding, the instinct, of which you spoke came on you more fearfully, more intelligibly than before ; whether you felt at once repelled from him, yet attracted towards him ; whether you felt [and the actress spoke with hurried animation] that with HIM was connected the secret of your life ! ”

“ All this I felt,” answered Glyndon, in a trembling voice, “ the first time I was in his presence. Though all around me was gay, — music, amidst lamp-lit trees, light converse near, and heaven without a cloud above, — my knees knocked together, my hair bristled, and my blood curdled like ice ; since then he has divided my thoughts with thee.”

“ No more, no more,” said Isabel, in a stifled tone ; “ there must be the hand of Fate in this. I can speak no more to you now ; farewell.”

She sprang past him into the house and closed the door. Glyndon did not dare to follow her, nor, strange as it may seem, was he so inclined. The thought and recollection of that moonlight hour in the gardens, of the strange address of Zicci, froze up all human passion ; Isabel herself, if not forgotten, shrank back like a shadow into the recesses of his breast. He shivered as he stepped into the sunlight, and musingly retraced his steps into the more populous parts of that liveliest of Italian cities.

## CHAPTER VIII.

It was a small cabinet; the walls were covered with pictures, one of which was worth more than the whole lineage of the owner of the palace. Is not Art a wonderful thing? A Venetian noble might be a fribble or an assassin, a scoundrel, or a dolt, worthless, or worse than worthless; yet he might have sat to Titian, and his portrait may be inestimable, — a few inches of painted canvas a thousand times more valuable than a man with his veins and muscles, brain, will, heart, and intellect!

In this cabinet sat a man of about three and forty, — dark-eyed, sallow, with short, prominent features, a massive conformation of jaw, and thick, sensual, but resolute lips; this man was the Prince di —. His form, middle-sized, but rather inclined to corpulence, was clothed in a loose dressing-robe of rich brocade; on a table before him lay his sword and hat, a mask, dice and dice-box, a portfolio, and an inkstand of silver curiously carved.

"Well, Mascari," said the Prince, looking up towards his parasite, who stood by the embrasure of the deep-set barricaded window, "well, you cannot even guess who this insolent meddler was? A pretty person you to act the part of a Prince's *Ruffiano*!"

"Am I to be blamed for dulness in not being able to conjecture who had the courage to thwart the projects of the Prince di —. As well blame me for not accounting for miracles."

"I will tell thee who it was, most sapient Mascari."

"Who, your Excellency?"

"Zicci."

"Ah! he has the daring of the devil. But why does your Excellency feel so assured, — does he court the actress?"

"I know not; but there is a tone in that foreigner's voice that I never can mistake, — so clear, and yet so hollow; when I hear it I almost fancy there is such a thing as conscience. However, we must rid ourselves of an impertinent. Mascari, Signor Zicci hath not yet honored our poor house with his presence. He is a distinguished stranger, — we must give a banquet in his honor."

"Ah! and the cypress wine! The cypress is the proper emblem of the grave."

"But this anon. I am superstitious; there are strange stories of his power and foresight, — remember the Sicilian quackery! But meanwhile the Pisani —"

"Your Excellency is infatuated. The actress has bewitched you."

"Mascari," said the Prince, with a haughty smile, "through these veins rolls the blood of the old Visconti, — of those who boasted that no woman ever escaped their lust, and no man their resentment. The crown of my fathers has shrunk into a gewgaw and a toy, — their ambition and their spirit are undecayed. My honor is now enlisted in this pursuit: Isabel must be mine."

"Another ambuscade?" said Mascari, inquiringly.

"Nay, why not enter the house itself? The situation is lonely, and the door is not made of iron."

Before Mascari could reply, the gentleman of the chamber announced the Signor Zicci.

The Prince involuntarily laid his hand on the sword placed on the table; then, with a smile at his own impulse, rose, and met the foreigner at the threshold with all the profuse and respectful courtesy of Italian simulation.

"This is an honor highly prized," said the Prince; "I have long desired the friendship of one so distinguished —"

"And I have come to give you that friendship," replied Zicci, in a sweet but chilling voice. "To no man yet in Naples have I extended this hand: permit it, Prince, to grasp your own."

The Neapolitan bowed over the hand he pressed; but as he touched it, a shiver came over him, and his heart stood still.

Zicci bent on him his dark, smiling eyes, and then seated himself with a familiar air.

"Thus it is signed and sealed, — I mean our friendship, noble Prince. And now I will tell you the object of my visit. I find, your Excellency, that, unconsciously perhaps, we are rivals. Can we not accommodate our pretensions? A girl of no moment, an actress, bah! it is not worth a quarrel. Shall we throw for her? He who casts the lowest shall resign his claim?"

Mascari opened his small eyes to their widest extent; the Prince, no less surprised, but far too well world-read even to show what he felt, laughed aloud.

"And were you, then, the cavalier who spoiled my night's chase and robbed me of my white doe? By Bacchus, it was prettily done."

"You must forgive me, my Prince; I knew not who it was, or my respect would have silenced my gallantry."

"All stratagems fair in love, as in war. Of course you profited by my defeat, and did not content yourself with leaving the little actress at her threshold?"

"She is Diana for me," answered Zicci, lightly; "whoever wins the wreath will not find a flower faded."

"And now you would cast for her, — well; but they tell me you are ever a sure player."

"Let Signor Mascari cast for us."

"Be it so. Mascari, the dice."

Surprised and perplexed, the parasite took up the three dice, deposited them gravely in the box, and rattled them noisily, while Zicci threw himself back carelessly in his chair and said, "I give the first chance to your Excellency."

Mascari interchanged a glance with his patron and threw: the numbers were sixteen.

"It is a high throw," said Zicci, calmly; "nevertheless, Signor Mascari, I do not despond."

Mascari gathered up the dice, shook the box, and rolled the contents once more upon the table; the number was the highest that can be thrown, — eighteen.

The Prince darted a glance of fire at his minion, who stood

with gaping mouth, staring at the dice, and shaking his head in puzzled wonder.

"I have won, you see," said Zicci: "may we be friends still?"

"Signor," said the Prince, obviously struggling with anger and confusion, "the victory is already yours. But, pardon me, you have spoken lightly of this young girl, — will anything tempt you to yield your claim?"

"Ah, do not think so ill of my gallantry."

"Enough," said the Prince, forcing a smile, "I yield. Let me prove that I do not yield ungraciously: will you honor me with your presence at a little feast I propose to give on the royal birthday?"

"It is indeed a happiness to hear one command of yours which I can obey."

Zicci then turned the conversation, talked lightly and gayly; and soon afterwards departed.

"Villain," then exclaimed the Prince, grasping Mascari by the collar, "you have betrayed me!"

"I assure your Excellency that the dice were properly arranged, — he should have thrown twelve; but he is the Devil, and that's the end of it."

"There is no time to be lost," said the Prince, quitting hold of his parasite, who quietly resettled his cravat.

"My blood is up! I will win this girl, if I die for it. Who laughed? Mascari, didst *thou* laugh?"

"I, your Excellency, — I laugh?"

"It sounded behind me," said the Prince, gazing round.

---

## CHAPTER IX.

It was the day on which Zicci had told Glyndon that he should ask for his decision in respect to Isabel, — the third day since their last meeting. The Englishman could not

come to a resolution. Ambition, hitherto the leading passion of his soul, could not yet be silenced by love, and that love, such as it was, unreturned, beset by suspicions and doubts which vanished in the presence of Isabel, and returned when her bright face shone on his eyes no more, for *les absents ont toujours tort*. Perhaps had he been quite alone, his feelings of honor, of compassion, of virtue, might have triumphed, and he would have resolved either to fly from Isabel or to offer the love that has no shame. But Merton, cold, cautious, experienced, wary (such a nature has ever power over the imaginative and the impassioned), was at hand to ridicule the impression produced by Zicci, and the notion of delicacy and honor towards an Italian actress. It is true that Merton, who was no profligate, advised him to quit all pursuit of Isabel; but then the advice was precisely of that character which, if it deadens love, stimulates passion. By representing Isabel as one who sought to play a part with him, he excused to Glyndon his own selfishness, — he enlisted the Englishman's vanity and pride on the side of his pursuit. Why should not he beat an adventuress at her own weapons?

Glyndon not only felt indisposed on that day to meet Zicci, but he felt also a strong desire to defeat the mysterious prophecy that the meeting should take place. Into this wish Merton readily entered. The young men agreed to be absent from Naples that day. Early in the morning they mounted their horses and took the road to Baiæ. Glyndon left word at his hotel that if Signor Zicci sought him, it was in the neighborhood of the once celebrated watering-place of the ancients that he should be found.

They passed by Isabel's house; but Glyndon resisted the temptation of pausing there, and threading the grotto of Paasilippo, they wound by a circuitous route back into the suburbs of the city, and took the opposite road, which conducts to Portici and Pompeii. It was late at noon when they arrived at the former of these places. Here they halted to dine; for Merton had heard much of the excellence of the macaroni at Portici, and Merton was a *bon vivant*.

They put up at an inn of very humble pretensions, and



dined under an awning. Merton was more than usually gay; he pressed the lacryma upon his friend, and conversed gayly.

"Well, my dear friend, we have foiled Signor Zicci in one of his predictions at least. You will have no faith in him hereafter."

"The Ides are come, not gone."

"Tush! if he is a soothsayer, you are not Cæsar. It is your vanity that makes you credulous. Thank Heaven, I do not think myself of such importance that the operations of Nature should be changed in order to frighten me."

"But why should the operations of Nature be changed? There may be a deeper philosophy than we dream of,—a philosophy that discovers the secrets of Nature, but does not alter, by penetrating, its courses."

"Ah! you suppose Zicci to be a prophet,—a reader of the future; perhaps an associate of Genii and Spirits!"

"I know not what to conjecture; but I see no reason why he should seek, even if an impostor, to impose on me. An impostor must have some motive for deluding us,—either ambition or avarice. I am neither rich nor powerful; Zicci spends more in a week than I do in a year. Nay, a Neapolitan banker told me that the sums invested by Zicci in his hands, were enough to purchase half the lands of the Neapolitan noblesse."

"Grant this to be true: do you suppose the love to dazzle and mystify is not as strong with some natures as that of gold and power with others? Zicci has a moral ostentation; and the same character that makes him rival kings in expenditure makes him not disdain to be wondered at even by a humble Englishman."

Here the landlord, a little, fat, oily fellow, came up with a fresh bottle of lacryma. He hoped their Excellencies were pleased. He was most touched,—touched to the heart that they liked the macaroni. Were their Excellencies going to Vesuvius? There was a slight eruption; they could not see it where they were, but it was pretty, and would be prettier still after sunset.

"A capital idea," cried Merton. "What say you, Glyndon?"

"I have not yet seen an eruption; I should like it much."

"But is there no danger?" said the prudent Merton.

"Oh! not at all; the mountain is very civil at present. It only plays a little, just to amuse their Excellencies the English."

"Well, order the horses, and bring the bill; we will go before it is dark. Clarence, my friend, *nunc est bibendum*; but take care of the *pede libero*, which won't do for walking on lava!"

The bottle was finished, the bill paid, the gentlemen mounted, the landlord bowed, and they bent their way in the cool of the delightful evening towards Resina.

The wine animated Glyndon, whose unequal spirits were at times high and brilliant as those of a school-boy released; and the laughter of the Northern tourists sounded oft and merrily along the melancholy domains of buried cities.

Hesperus had lighted his lamp amidst the rosy skies as they arrived at Resina. Here they quitted their horses and took mules and a guide. As the sky grew darker and more dark, the Mountain Fire burned with an intense lustre. In various streaks and streamlets the fountain of flame rolled down the dark summit, then undiminished by the eruption of 1822, and the Englishmen began to feel increase upon them, as they ascended, that sensation of solemnity and awe which makes the very atmosphere that surrounds the giant of the Plains of the Antique Hades.

It was night when, leaving the mules, they ascended on foot, accompanied by their guide and a peasant, who bore a rude torch. Their guide was a conversable, garrulous fellow, like most of his country and his calling; and Merton, whose chief characteristics were a sociable temper and a hardy commonsense, loved to amuse or to instruct himself on every incidental occasion.

"Ah, Excellency," said the guide, "your countrymen have a strong passion for the volcano. Long life to them; they bring us plenty of money. If our fortunes depended on the Neapolitans, we should starve."

"True, they have no curiosity," said Merton. "Do you re-

member, Glyndon, the contempt with which that old count said to us, 'You will go to Vesuvius, I suppose. I have never been: why should I go? You have cold, you have hunger, you have fatigue, you have danger, and all for nothing but to see fire, which looks just as well in a brazier as a mountain.' Ha! ha! the old fellow was right."

"But, Excellency," said the guide, "that is not all: some cavaliers think to ascend the mountain without our help. I am sure they deserve to tumble into the crater."

"They must be bold fellows to go alone: you don't often find such?"

"Sometimes among the French, signor. But the other night—I never was so frightened. I had been with an English party, and a lady had left a pocket-book on the mountain where she had been sketching. She offered me a handsome sum to return for it, and bring it to her at Naples; so I went in the evening. I found it sure enough, and was about to return, when I saw a figure that seemed to emerge from the crater itself. The air was so pestiferous that I could not have conceived a human creature could breathe it and live. I was so astounded that I stood as still as a stone, till the figure came over the hot ashes and stood before me face to face. Sancta Maria, what a head!"

"What, hideous?"

"No, so beautiful, but so terrible. It had nothing human in its aspect."

"And what said the salamander?"

"Nothing! It did not even seem to perceive me, though I was as near as I am to you; but its eyes seemed prying into the air. It passed by me quickly, and, walking across a stream of burning lava, soon vanished on the other side of the mountain. I was curious and foolhardy, and resolved to see if I could bear the atmosphere which this visitor had left; but though I did not advance within thirty yards of the spot at which he had first appeared, I was driven back by a vapor that well-nigh stifled me. *Cospetto!* I have spit blood ever since."

"It must be Zicci," whispered Glyndon.

"I knew you would say so," returned Merton, laughing.

The little party had now arrived nearly at the summit of the mountain; and unspeakably grand was the spectacle on which they gazed. From the crater arose a vapor, intensely dark, that overspread the whole background of the heavens, in the centre whereof rose a flame that assumed a form singularly beautiful. It might have been compared to a crest of gigantic feathers, the diadem of the mountain, high arched, and drooping downward, with the hues delicately shaded off, and the whole shifting and tremulous as the plumage on a warrior's helm. The glare of the flame spread, luminous and crimson, over the dark and rugged ground on which they stood, and drew an innumerable variety of shadows from crag and hollow. An oppressive and sulphureous exhalation served to increase the gloomy and sublime terror of the place. But on turning from the mountain, and towards the distant and unseen ocean, the contrast was wonderfully great: the heavens serene and blue, the stars still and calm as the eyes of Divine Love. It was as if the realms of the opposing principles of Evil and Good were brought in one view before the gaze of man! Glyndon — the enthusiast, the poet, the artist, the dreamer — was enchained and entranced by emotions vague and undefinable, half of delight and half of pain. Leaning on the shoulder of his friend, he gazed around him, and heard, with deepening awe, the rumbling of the earth below, the wheels and voices of the Ministry of Nature in her darkest and most inscrutable recess. Suddenly, as a bomb from a shell, a huge stone was flung hundreds of yards up from the jaws of the crater, and falling with a mighty crash upon the rock below, split into ten thousand fragments, which bounded down the sides of the mountain, sparkling and groaning as they went. One of these, the largest fragment, struck the narrow space of soil between the Englishman and the guide, not three feet from the spot where the former stood. Merton uttered an exclamation of terror, and Glyndon held his breath and shuddered.

"Diavolo!" cried the guide; "descend, Excellencies, descend! We have not a moment to lose; follow me close."

So saying, the guide and the peasant fled with as much swiftness as they were able to bring to bear. Merton, ever

more prompt and ready than his friend, imitated their example; and Glyndon, more confused than alarmed, followed close. But they had not gone many yards before, with a rushing and sudden blast, came from the crater an enormous volume of vapor. It pursued, it overtook, it overspread them; it swept the light from the heavens. All was abrupt and utter darkness, and through the gloom was heard the shout of the guide, already distant, and lost in an instant amidst the sound of the rushing gust and the groans of the earth beneath. Glyndon paused. He was separated from his friend, from the guide. He was alone with the Darkness and the Terror. The vapor rolled sullenly away; the form of the plumed fire was again dimly visible, and its struggling and perturbed reflection again shed a glow over the horrors of the path. Glyndon recovered himself, and sped onward. Below, he heard the voice of Merton calling on him, though he no longer saw his form. The sound served as a guide. Dizzy and breathless, he bounded forward, when hark! a sullen, slow, rolling sound in his ear! He halted, and turned back to gaze. The fire had overflowed its course; it had opened itself a channel amidst the furrows of the mountain. The stream pursued him fast, fast, and the hot breath of the chasing and preternatural foe came closer and closer upon his cheek. He turned aside; he climbed desperately, with hands and feet, upon a crag that, to the right, broke the scathed and blasted level of the soil. The stream rolled beside and beneath him, and then, taking a sudden wind round the spot on which he stood, interposed its liquid fire — a broad and impassable barrier — between his resting-place and escape. There he stood, cut off from descent, and with no alternative but to retrace his steps towards the crater, and thence seek — without guide or clew — some other pathway.

For a moment his courage left him; he cried in despair, and in that overstrained pitch of voice which is never heard afar off, to the guide, to Merton, to return, to aid him.

No answer came; and the Englishman, thus abandoned solely to his own resources, felt his spirit and energy rise against the danger. He turned back, and ventured as far

towards the crater as the noxious exhalation would permit; then, gazing below, carefully and deliberately he chalked out for himself a path, by which he trusted to shun the direction the fire-stream had taken, and trod firmly and quickly over the crumbling and heated strata.

He had proceeded about fifty yards when he halted abruptly: an unspeakable and unaccountable horror, not hitherto felt amidst all his peril, came over him. He shook in every limb; his muscles refused his will; he felt, as it were, palsied and death-stricken. The horror, I say, was unaccountable, for the path seemed clear and safe. The fire, above and behind, burned out clear and far; and beyond, the stars lent him their cheering guidance. No obstacle was visible, no danger seemed at hand. As thus, spell-bound and panic-stricken, he stood chained to the soil—his breast heaving, large drops rolling down his brow, and his eyes starting wildly from their sockets—he saw before him, at some distance, gradually shaping itself more and more distinctly to his gaze, a Colossal Shadow,—a shadow that seemed partially borrowed from the human shape, but immeasurably above the human stature, vague, dark, almost formless and differing—he could not tell where or why—not only from the proportions, but also from the limbs and outline of man.

The glare of the volcano, that seemed to shrink and collapse from this gigantic and appalling apparition, nevertheless threw its light, redly and steadily, upon another shape that stood beside, quiet and motionless; and it was perhaps the contrast of these two things—the Being and the Shadow—that impressed the beholder with the difference between them,—the Man and the Superhuman. It was but for a moment, nay, for the tenth part of a moment, that this sight was permitted to the wanderer. A second eddy of sulphureous vapors from the volcano, yet more rapidly, yet more densely than its predecessor, rolled over the mountain; and either the nature of the exhalation, or the excess of his own dread, was such that Glyndon, after one wild gasp for breath, fell senseless on the earth.

-----

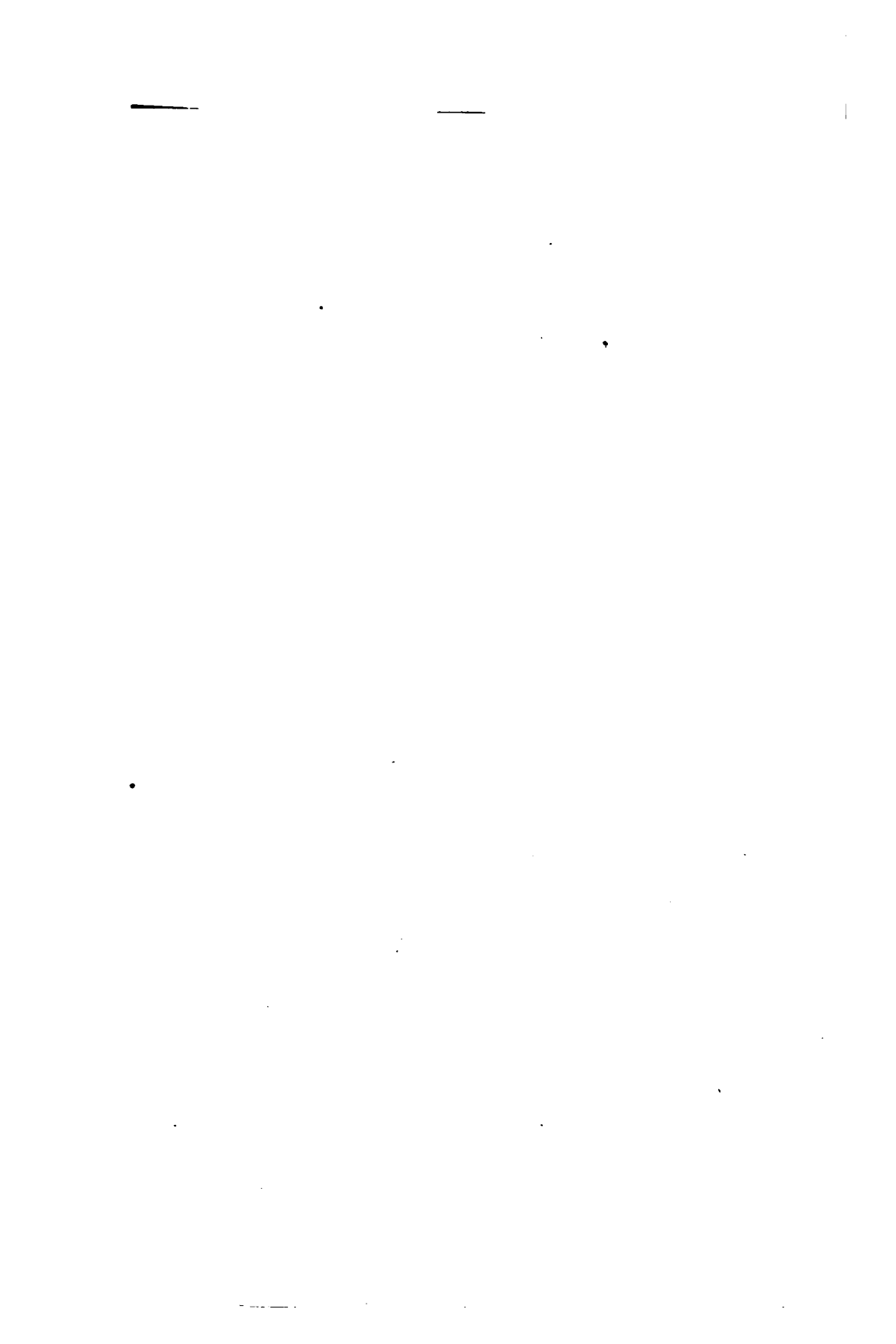
.

.

.

-----

-----









## CHAPTER X.

MERTON and the Italians arrived in safety at the spot where they had left the mules; and not till they had recovered their own alarm and breath did they think of Glyndon. But then, as the minutes passed and he appeared not, Merton — whose heart was as good, at least, as human hearts are in general — grew seriously alarmed. He insisted on returning to search for his friend, and by dint of prodigal promises prevailed at last on the guide to accompany him. The lower part of the mountain lay calm and white in the starlight; and the guide's practised eye could discern all objects on the surface, at a considerable distance. They had not, however, gone very far before they perceived two forms slowly approaching towards them.

As they came near, Merton recognized the form of his friend. "Thank Heaven, he is safe!" he cried, turning to the guide.

"Holy angels befriend us!" said the Italian, trembling; "behold the very being that crossed me last Sabbath night. It is he, but his face is human now!"

"Signor Inglese," said the voice of Zicci as Glyndon, pale, wan, and silent, returned passively the joyous greeting of Merton, — "Signor Inglese, I told your friend we should meet to-night; you see you have not foiled my prediction."

"But how, but where?" stammered Merton, in great confusion and surprise.

"I found your friend stretched on the ground, overpowered by the mephitic exhalation of the crater. I bore him to a purer atmosphere; and as I know the mountain well, I have conducted him safely to you. This is all our history. You see, sir, that were it not for that prophecy which you desired

to frustrate, your friend would, ere this time, have been a corpse; one minute more, and the vapor had done its work. Adieu! good night and pleasant dreams."

"But, my preserver, you will not leave us," said Glyndon, anxiously, and speaking for the first time. "Will you not return with us?"

Zicci paused, and drew Glyndon aside. "Young man," said he, gravely, "it is necessary that we should again meet to-night. It is necessary that you should, ere the first hour of morning, decide on your fate. Will you marry Isabel di Pisani, or lose her forever? Consult not your friend; he is sensible and wise, but not now is his wisdom needed. There are times in life when from the imagination, and not the reason, should wisdom come, — this for you is one of them. I ask not your answer now. Collect your thoughts, recover your jaded and scattered spirits. It wants two hours of midnight: at midnight I will be with you!"

"Incomprehensible being," replied the Englishman, "I would leave the life you have preserved in your own hands. But since I have known you, my whole nature has changed. A fiercer desire than that of love burns in my veins, — the desire, not to resemble, but to surpass my kind; the desire to penetrate and to share the secret of your own existence; the desire of a preternatural knowledge and unearthly power. Instruct me, school me, make me thine; and I surrender to thee at once, and without a murmur, the woman that, till I saw thee, I would have defied a world to obtain."

"I ask not the sacrifice, Glyndon," replied Zicci, coldly, yet mildly, "yet — shall I own it to thee? — I am touched by the devotion I have inspired. I sicken for *human* companionship, sympathy, and friendship; yet I dread to share them, for bold must be the man who can partake my existence and enjoy my confidence. Once more I say to thee, in compassion and in warning, the choice of life is in thy hands, — to-morrow it will be too late. On the one hand, Isabel, a tranquil home, a happy and serene life; on the other hand all is darkness, — darkness that even this eye cannot penetrate."

"But thou hast told me that if I wed Isabel I must be

contented to be obscure ; and if I refuse, that knowledge and power may be mine."

"Vain man ! knowledge and power are not happiness."

"But they are better than happiness. Say, if I marry Isabel, wilt thou be my master, my guide ? Say this, and I am resolved."

"Never ! It is only the lonely at heart, the restless, the desperate, that may be my pupils."

"Then I renounce her ! I renounce love, I renounce happiness. Welcome solitude, welcome despair, if they are the entrances to thy dark and sublime secret."

"I will not take thy answer now ; at midnight thou shalt give it in one word, — ay, or no ! Farewell till then !"

The mystic waved his hand, and descending rapidly, was seen no more.

Glyndon rejoined his impatient and wondering friend ; but Merton, gazing on his face, saw that a great change had passed there. The flexible and dubious expression of youth was forever gone ; the features were locked, rigid, and stern ; and so faded was the natural bloom that an hour seemed to have done the work of years.

---

## CHAPTER XI.

ON returning from Vesuvius or Pompeii you enter Naples through its most animated, its most Neapolitan quarter, through that quarter in which Modern life most closely resembles the Ancient, and in which, when, on a fair day, the thoroughfare swarms alike with Indolence and Trade, you are impressed at once with the recollection of that restless, lively race from which the population of Naples derives its origin ; so that in one day you may see at Pompeii the habitations of a remote age, and on the Mole at Naples you may imagine you behold the very beings with which those habitations had

been peopled. The language of words is dead, but the language of gestures remains little impaired. A fisherman, a peasant, of Naples will explain to you the motions, the attitudes, the gestures of the figures painted on the antique vases better than the most learned antiquary of Göttingen or Leipsic.

But now, as the Englishmen rode slowly through the deserted streets, lighted but by the lamps of heaven, all the gayety of the day was hushed and breathless. Here and there, stretched under a portico or a dingy booth, were sleeping groups of houseless lazzaroni, — a tribe now happily merging this indolent individuality amidst an energetic and active population.

The Englishmen rode on in silence, for Glyndon neither appeared to heed or hear the questions and comments of Merton, and Merton himself was almost as weary as the jaded animal he bestrode.

Suddenly the silence of earth and ocean was broken by the sound of a distant clock, that proclaimed the last hour of night. Glyndon started from his reverie, and looked anxiously around. As the final stroke died, the noise of hoofs rang on the broad stones of the pavement, and from a narrow street to the right emerged the form of a solitary horseman. He neared the Englishmen, and Glyndon recognized the features and mien of Zicci.

"What! do we meet again, signor?" said Merton, in a vexed but drowsy tone.

"Your friend and I have business together," replied Zicci, as he wheeled his powerful and fiery steed to the side of Glyndon; "but it will be soon transacted. Perhaps you, sir, will ride on to your hotel."

"Alone?"

"There is no danger," returned Zicci, with a slight expression of disdain in his voice.

"None to me, but to Glyndon?"

"Danger from me? Ah! perhaps you are right."

"Go on, my dear Merton," said Glyndon. "I will join you before you reach the hotel."

Merton nodded, whistled, and pushed his horse into a kind of amble.

"Now your answer, — quick."

"I have decided: the love of Isabel has vanished from my heart. The pursuit is over."

"You have decided?"

"I have."

"Adieu! join your friend."

Zicci gave the rein to his horse; it sprang forward with a bound; the sparks flew from its hoofs, and horse and rider disappeared amidst the shadows of the street whence they had emerged.

Merton was surprised to see his friend by his side, a minute after they had parted.

"What business can you have with Zicci? Will you not confide in me?"

"Merton, do not ask me to-night; I am in a dream."

"I do not wonder at it, for even I am in a sleep. Let us push on."

In the retirement of his chamber, Glyndon sought to recollect his thoughts. He sat down on the foot of his bed and pressed his hands tightly to his throbbing temples. The events of the last few hours, the apparition of the gigantic and shadowy Companion of the Mystic amidst the fires and clouds of Vesuvius, the strange encounter with Zicci himself on a spot in which he could never have calculated on finding Glyndon, filled his mind with emotions, in which terror and awe the least prevailed. A fire, the train of which had long been laid, was lighted at his heart, — the asbestos fire that, once lit, is never to be quenched. All his early aspiration, his young ambition, his longings for the laurel, were mingled in one passionate yearning to overpass the bounds of the common knowledge of man, and reach that solemn spot, between two worlds, on which the mysterious stranger appeared to have fixed his home.

Far from recalling with renewed affright the remembrance of the apparition that had so appalled him, the recollection only served to kindle and concentrate his curiosity into a

burning focus. He had said aright, — love had vanished from his heart; there was no longer a serene space amidst its disordered elements for human affection to move and breathe. The enthusiast was rapt from this earth; and he would have surrendered all that beauty ever promised, that mortal hope ever whispered, for one hour with Zicci beyond the portals of the visible world.

He rose, oppressed and fevered with the new thoughts that raged within him, and threw open his casement for air. The ocean lay suffused in the starry light, and the stillness of the heavens never more eloquently preached the morality of repose to the madness of earthly passions. But such was Glyndon's mood that their very hush only served to deepen the wild desires that preyed upon his soul. And the solemn stars, that are mysteries in themselves, seemed by a kindred sympathy to agitate the wings of the spirit no longer contented with its cage. As he gazed, a star shot from its brethren and vanished from the depth of space!



## CHAPTER XII.

THE sleep of Glyndon that night was unusually profound, and the sun streamed full upon his eyes as he opened them to the day. He rose refreshed, and with a strange sentiment of calmness, that seemed more the result of resolution than exhaustion. The incidents and emotions of the past night had settled into distinct and clear impressions. He thought of them but slightly, — he thought rather of the future. He was as one of the Initiated in the old Egyptian Mysteries, who have crossed the Gate only to look more ardently for the Penetralia.

He dressed himself, and was relieved to find that Merton had joined a party of his countrymen on an excursion to Ischia. He spent the heat of noon in thoughtful solitude, and gradu-



ally the image of Isabel returned to his heart. It was a holy — for it was a *human* — image; he had resigned her, and he repented. The light of day served, if not to dissipate, at least to sober, the turbulence and fervor of the preceding night. But was it indeed too late to retract his resolve? "Too late!" terrible words! Of what do we not repent, when the Ghost of the Deed returns to us to say, "Thou hast no recall"?

He started impatiently from his seat, seized his hat and sword, and strode with rapid steps to the humble abode of the actress.

The distance was considerable, and the air oppressive. Glyndon arrived at the door breathless and heated. He knocked, no answer came; he lifted the latch and entered. No sound, no sight of life, met his ear and eye. In the front chamber, on a table, lay the guitar of the actress and some manuscript parts in plays. He paused, and summoning courage, tapped at the door which seemed to lead into the inner apartment. The door was ajar; and hearing no sound within, he pushed it open. It was the sleeping chamber of the young actress, — that holiest ground to a lover. And well did the place become the presiding deity: none of the tawdry finery of the Profession was visible on the one hand, none of the slovenly disorder common to the humbler classes of the South on the other. All was pure and simple; even the ornaments were those of an innocent refinement, — a few books placed carefully on shelves, a few half-faded flowers in an earthen vase which was modelled and painted in the Etruscan fashion. The sunlight streamed over the snowy draperies of the bed, and a few articles of clothing, neatly folded, on the chair beside it. Isabel was not there; and Glyndon, as he gazed around, observed that the casement which opened to the ground was wrenched and broken, and several fragments of the shattered glass lay below. The light flashed at once upon Glyndon's mind, — the ravisher had borne away his prize. The ominous words of Zicci were fulfilled: it was too late! Wretch that, he was, perhaps he might have saved her! But the nurse, — was she gone also? He made the house resound

with the name of Gionetta, but there was not even an echo to reply. He resolved to repair at once to the abode of Zicci. On arriving at the palace of the Corsican, he was informed that the signor was gone to the banquet of the Prince di —, and would not return until late. He turned in dismay from the door, and perceived the heavy carriage of the Count Cetoxa rolling along the narrow street. Cetoxa recognized him and stopped the carriage.

"Ah! my dear Signor Glyndon," said he, leaning out of the window, "and how goes your health? You heard the news?"

"What news?" asked Glyndon, mechanically.

"Why, the beautiful actress,—the wonder of Naples! I always thought she would have good luck."

"Well, well, what of her?"

"The Prince di — has taken a prodigious fancy to her, and has carried her to his own palace. The Court is a little scandalized."

"The villain! by force?"

"Force! Ha! ha! my dear signor, what need of force to persuade an actress to accept the splendid protection of one of the wealthiest noblemen in Italy? Oh, no! you may be sure she went willingly enough. I only just heard the news: the prince himself proclaimed his triumph this morning, and the accommodating Mascari has been permitted to circulate it. I hope the connection will not last long, or we shall lose our best singer. *Addio!*"

Glyndon stood mute and motionless. He knew not what to think, to believe, or how to act. Even Merton was not at hand to advise him. His conscience smote him bitterly; and half in despair, half in the courageous wrath of jealousy, he resolved to repair to the palace of the prince himself, and demand his captive in the face of his assembled guests.

## CHAPTER XIII.

WE must go back to the preceding night. The actress and her nurse had returned from the theatre; and Isabel, fatigued and exhausted, had thrown herself on a sofa, while Gionetta busied herself with the long tresses which, released from the fillet that bound them, half concealed the form of the actress, like a veil of threads of gold; and while she smoothed the luxuriant locks, the old nurse ran gossiping on about the little events of the night, — the scandal and politics of the scenes and the tire-room.

The clock sounded the hour of midnight, and still Isabel detained the nurse; for a vague and foreboding fear, she could not account for, made her seek to protract the time of solitude and rest.

At length Gionetta's voice was swallowed up in successive yawns. She took her lamp and departed to her own room, which was placed in the upper story of the house. Isabel was alone. The half-hour after midnight sounded dull and distant, all was still, and she was about to enter her sleeping-room, when she heard the hoofs of a horse at full speed. The sound ceased; there was a knock at the door. Her heart beat violently; but fear gave way to another sentiment when she heard a voice, too well known, calling on her name. She went to the door.

"Open, Isabel, — it is Zicci," said the voice again.

And why did the actress feel fear no more, and why did that virgin hand unbar the door to admit, without a scruple or a doubt, at that late hour, the visit of the fairest cavalier of Naples? I know not; but Zicci had become her destiny, and she obeyed the voice of her preserver as if it were the command of Fate.

Zicci entered with a light and hasty step. His horseman's

cloak fitted tightly to his noble form, and the raven plumes of his broad hat threw a gloomy shade over his commanding features.

The girl followed him into the room, trembling and blushing deeply, and stood before him with the lamp she held shining upward on her cheek, and the long hair that fell like a shower of light over the bare shoulders and heaving bust.

"Isabel," said Zicci, in a voice that spoke deep emotion, "I am by thy side once more to save thee. Not a moment is to be lost. Thou must fly with me, or remain the victim of the Prince di ——. I would have made the charge I now undertake another's, — thou knowest I would, thou knowest it; but he is not worthy of thee, the cold Englishman! I throw myself at thy feet; have trust in me, and fly."

He grasped her hand passionately as he dropped on his knee, and looked up into her face with his bright, beseeching eyes.

"Fly with thee!" said Isabel, tenderly.

"Thou knowest the penalty, — name, fame, honor, all will be sacrificed if thou dost not."

"Then, then," said the wild girl, falteringly, and turning aside her face, "then I am not indifferent to thee. Thou wouldest not give me to another; thou lovest me?"

Zicci was silent; but his breast heaved, his cheeks flushed, his eyes darted dark but impassioned fire.

"Speak!" exclaimed Isabel, in jealous suspicion of his silence. "Speak, if thou lovest me."

"I dare not tell thee so; I will not yet say I love thee."

"Then what matter my fate?" said Isabel, turning pale and shrinking from his side. "Leave me; I fear no danger. My life, and therefore my honor, is in mine own hands."

"Be not so mad!" said Zicci. "Hark! do you hear the neigh of my steed? It is an alarm that warns us of the approaching peril. Haste, or you are lost."

"Why do you care for me?" said the girl, bitterly. "Thou hast read my heart; thou knowest that I would fly with thee to the end of the world, if I were but sure of thy love; that all sacrifice of womanhood's repute were sweet to me, if re-

garded as the proof and seal of affection. But to be bound beneath the weight of a cold obligation; to be the beggar on the eyes of Indifference; to throw myself on one who loves me not, — *that* were indeed the vilest sin of my sex. Ah! Zicci, rather let me die."

She had thrown back her clustering hair from her face as she spoke; and as she now stood, with her arms drooping mournfully, and her hands clasped together with the proud bitterness of her wayward spirit, giving new zest and charm to her singular beauty, it was impossible to conceive a sight more irresistible to the senses and the heart.

"Tempt me not to thine own danger, perhaps destruction," exclaimed Zicci, in faltering accents; "thou canst not dream of what thou wouldst demand. Come," and, advancing, he wound his arm round her waist, "come, Isabel! Believe at least in my friendship, my protection —"

"And not thy love," said the Italian, turning on him her hurried and reproachful eyes. Those eyes met his, and he could not withdraw from the charm of their gaze. He felt her heart throbbing beneath his own; her breath came warm upon his cheek. He trembled, — *he*, the lofty, the mysterious Zicci, — who seemed to stand aloof from his race. With a deep and burning sigh he murmured, "Isabel, I love thee!"

That beautiful face, bathed in blushes, drooped upon his bosom; and as he bent down, his lips sought the rosy mouth, — a long and burning kiss. Danger, life, the world were forgotten! Suddenly Zicci tore himself from her.

"Oh! what have I said? It is gone, — my power to preserve thee, to guard thee, to foresee the storm in thy skies, is gone forever. No matter! Haste, haste; and may love supply the loss of prophecy and power!"

Isabel hesitated no more. She threw her mantle over her shoulders and gathered up her dishevelled hair; a moment, and she was prepared, — when a sudden crash was heard in the inner room.

"Too late! — fool that I was — too late!" cried Zicci, in a sharp tone of agony as he hurried to the outer door. He opened it, only to be borne back by the press of armed men.

Behind, before, escape was cut off. The room literally swarmed with the followers of the ravisher, masked, mailed, armed to the teeth.

Isabel was already in the grasp of two of the myrmidons; her shriek smote the ear of Zicci. He sprang forward, and Isabel heard his wild cry in a foreign tongue, — the gleam, the clash of swords. She lost her senses; and when she recovered, she found herself gagged, and in a carriage that was driven rapidly, by the side of a masked and motionless figure. The carriage stopped at the portals of a gloomy mansion. The gates opened noiselessly, a broad flight of steps, brilliantly illumined, was before her, — she was in the palace of the Prince di —.



#### CHAPTER XIV.

THE young actress was led to and left alone in a chamber adorned with all the luxurious and half-Eastern taste that at one time characterized the palaces of the great seigneurs of Italy. Her first thought was for Zicci, — was he yet living? Had he escaped unscathed the blades of the foe, — her new treasure, the new light of her life, her lord, at last her lover?

She had short time for reflection. She heard steps approaching the chamber; she drew back. She placed her hand on the dagger that at all hours she wore concealed in her bosom. Living or dead, she would be faithful still to Zicci! There was a new motive to the preservation of honor. The door opened, and the Prince entered, in a dress that sparkled with jewels.

"Fair and cruel one," said he, advancing, with a half-sneer upon his lip, "thou wilt not too harshly blame the violence of love." He attempted to take her hand as he spoke.

"Nay," said he, as she recoiled, "reflect that thou art now

in the power of one that never faltered in the pursuit of an object less dear to him than thou art. Thy lover, presumptuous though he be, is not by to save thee. Mine thou art; but instead of thy master, suffer me to be thy slave."

"My lord," said Isabel, with a stern gravity which perhaps the Stage had conspired with Nature to bestow upon her, "your boast is in vain. Your power, — I am *not* in your power! Life and death are in my own hands. I will not defy, but I do not fear you. I feel — and in some feelings," added Isabel, with a solemnity almost thrilling, "there is all the strength and all the divinity of knowledge — I feel that I am safe even here; but you, you, Prince di —, have brought danger to your home and hearth!"

The Neapolitan seemed startled by an earnestness and a boldness he was but little prepared for. He was not, however, a man easily intimidated or deterred from any purpose he had formed; and approaching Isabel, he was about to reply with much warmth, real or affected, when a knock was heard at the door of the chamber. The sound was repeated, and the Prince, chafed at the interruption, opened the door and demanded impatiently who had ventured to disobey his orders and invade his leisure. Mascari presented himself, pale and agitated. "My lord," said he, in a whisper, "pardon me, but a stranger is below who insists on seeing you; and from some words he let fall, I judged it advisable even to infringe your commands."

"A stranger, and at this hour! What business can he pretend? Why was he even admitted?"

"He asserts that your life is in imminent danger. The source whence it proceeds he will relate to your Excellency alone."

The Prince frowned, but his color changed. He mused a moment, and then, re-entering the chamber and advancing towards Isabel, he said, —

"Believe me, fair creature, I have no wish to take advantage of my power. I would fain trust alone to the gentler authorities of affection. Hold yourself queen within these walls more absolutely than you have ever enacted that part on the stage.

To-night, farewell! May your sleep be calm, and your dreams propitious to my hopes!"

With these words he retired, and in a few moments Isabel was surrounded by officious attendants, whom she at length, with some difficulty, dismissed; and refusing to retire to rest, she spent the night in examining the chamber, which she found was secured, and in thoughts of Zicci, in whose power she felt an almost preternatural confidence.

Meanwhile the Prince descended the stairs, and sought the room into which the stranger had been shown.

He found him wrapped from head to foot in a long robe, — half gown, half mantle, — such as was sometimes worn by ecclesiastics. The face of this stranger was remarkable; so sunburnt and swarthy were his hues that he must, apparently, have derived his origin amongst the races of the farthest East. His forehead was lofty, and his eyes so penetrating, yet so calm, in their gaze that the Prince shrank from them as we shrink from a questioner who is drawing forth the guiltiest secrets of our hearts.

"What would you with me?" asked the Prince, motioning his visitor to a seat.

"Prince di ——," said the stranger, in a voice deep and sweet, but foreign in its accent, "son of the most energetic and masculine race that ever applied godlike genius to the service of the Human Will, with its winding wickedness and its stubborn grandeur; descendant of the great Visconti, in whose chronicles lies the History of Italy in her palmy day, and in whose rise was the development of the mightiest intellect ripened by the most relentless ambition, — I come to gaze upon the last star in a darkening firmament. By this hour to-morrow space shall know it not. Man, thy days are numbered!"

"What means this jargon?" said the Prince, in visible astonishment and secret awe. "Comest thou to menace me in my own halls, or wouldest thou warn me of a danger? Art thou some itinerant mountebank, or some unguessed-of friend? Speak out, and plainly. What danger threatens me?"

"Zicci!" replied the stranger.



"Ha! ha!" said the Prince, laughing scornfully; "I half suspected thee from the first. Thou art, then, the accomplice or the tool of that most dexterous, but, at present, defeated charlatan. And I suppose thou wilt tell me that if I were to release a certain captive I have made, the danger would vanish and the hand of the dial would be put back?"

"Judge of me as thou wilt, Prince di —. I confess my knowledge of Zicci, — a knowledge shared but by a few, who — But this touches thee not. I would save, therefore I warn thee. Dost thou ask me why? I will tell thee. Canst thou remember to have heard wild tales of thy grandsire, — of his desire for a knowledge that passes that of the schools and cloisters; of a strange man from the East, who was his familiar and master in lore, against which the Vatican has from age to age launched its mimic thunder? Dost thou call to mind the fortunes of thy ancestor, — how he succeeded in youth to little but a name; how, after a career wild and dissolute as thine, he disappeared from Milan, a pauper and a self-exile; how, after years spent none knew in what climes or in what pursuits, he again revisited the city where his progenitors had reigned; how with him came this wise man of the East, the mystic Mejnour; how they who beheld him, beheld with amaze and fear that time had ploughed no furrow on his brow, — that youth seemed fixed as by a spell upon his face and form? Dost thou know that from that hour his fortunes rose? Kinsmen the most remote died, estate upon estate fell into the hands of the ruined noble. He allied himself with the royalty of Austria, he became the guide of princes, the first magnate of Italy. He founded anew the house of which thou art the last lineal upholder, and transferred its splendor from Milan to the Sicilian realms. Visions of high ambition were then present with him nightly and daily. Had he lived, Italy would have known a new dynasty, and the Visconti would have reigned over Magna Græcia. He was a man such as the world rarely sees; he was worthy to be of us, worthy to be the pupil of Mejnour, — whom you now see before you."

The Prince, who had listened with deep and breathless attention to the words of his singular guest, started from his

seat at his last words. "Impostor!" he cried, "can you dare thus to play with my credulity? Sixty years have passed since my grandsire died; and you, a man younger apparently than myself, have the assurance to pretend to have been his contemporary! But you have imperfectly learned your tale. You know not, it seems, that my grandsire — wise and illustrious, indeed, in all save his faith in a charlatan — was found dead in his bed in the very hour when his colossal plans were ripe for execution, and that Mejnour was guilty of his murder?"

"Alas!" answered the stranger, in a voice of great sadness, "had he but listened to Mejnour, had he delayed the last and most perilous ordeal of daring wisdom until the requisite training and initiation had been completed, your ancestor would have stood with me upon an eminence which the waters of Death itself wash everlastingly, but cannot overflow. Your grandsire resisted my fervent prayers, disobeyed my most absolute commands, and in the sublime rashness of a soul that panted for the last secrets, perished, — the victim of his own frenzy."

"He was poisoned, and Mejnour fled."

"Mejnour fled not," answered the stranger, quickly and proudly. "Mejnour could not fly from danger, for to him danger is a thing long left behind. It was the day before the duke took the fatal draught which he believed was to confer on the mortal the immortal boon that, finding my power over him was gone, I abandoned him to his doom. On the night on which your grandsire breathed his last, I was standing alone at moonlight on the ruins of Persepolis, — for my wanderings, space hath no obstacle. But a truce with this: I loved your grandsire; I would save the last of his race. Oppose not thyself to Zicci. Oppose not thyself to thine evil passions. Draw back from the precipice while there is yet time. In thy front and in thine eyes I detect some of that diviner glory which belonged to thy race. Thou hast in thee some germs of their hereditary genius, but they are choked up by worse than thy hereditary vices. Recollect, by genius thy house rose, — by vice it ever failed to perpetuate its power. In the

laws which regulate the Universe it is decreed that nothing wicked can long endure. Be wise, and let history warn thee. Thou standest on the verge of two worlds, — the Past and the Future; and voices from either shriek omen in thy ear. I have done. I bid thee farewell."

"Not so; thou shalt not quit these walls. I will make experiment of thy boasted power. What ho there! ho!"

The Prince shouted; the room was filled with his minions.

"Seize that man!" he cried, pointing to the spot which had been filled by the form of Mejnour. To his inconceivable amaze and horror, the spot was vacant. The mysterious stranger had vanished like a dream.

---

## CHAPTER XV.

It was the first faint and gradual break of the summer dawn; and two men stood in a balcony overhanging a garden fragrant with the scents of the awakening flowers. The stars had not left the sky, the birds were yet silent on the boughs; all was still, hushed, and tranquil. But how different the tranquillity of reviving day from the solemn repose of night! In the music of silence there are a thousand variations. These men, who alone seemed awake in Naples, were Zicci and the mysterious stranger, who had but an hour or two ago startled the Prince di — in his voluptuous palace.

"No," said the latter, "hadst thou delayed the acceptance of the Arch Gift until thou hadst attained to the years and passed through all the desolate bereavements that chilled and scared myself ere my researches had made it mine, thou wouldest have escaped the curse of which thou complainest now. Thou wouldest not have mourned over the brevity of human affection as compared to the duration of thine own existence, for thou wouldest have survived the very desire and

dream of the love of woman. Brightest, and but for that error perhaps the loftiest, of the secret and solemn race that fills up the interval in creation between mankind and the demons, age after age wilt thou rue the splendid folly which made thee ask to carry the beauty and the passions of youth into the dreary grandeur of earthly immortality."

"I do not repent, nor shall I," answered Zicci, coldly. "The transport and the sorrow, so wildly blended, which diversify my doom, are better than the calm and bloodless tenor of thy solitary way. Thou, who lovest nothing, hatest nothing,—feelest nothing, and walkest the world with the noiseless and joyless footsteps of a dream!"

"You mistake," replied he who had owned the name of Mejnour; "though I care not for love, and am dead to every *passion* that agitates the sons of clay, I am not dead to their more serene enjoyments. I have still left to me the sublime pleasures of wisdom and of friendship. I carry down the stream of the countless years, not the turbulent desires of youth, but the calm and spiritual delights of age. Wisely and deliberately I abandoned youth forever when I separated my lot from men. Let us not envy or reproach each other. I would have saved this Neapolitan, Zicci (since so it now pleases thee to be called), partly because his grandsire was but divided by the last airy barrier from our own brotherhood, partly because I know that in the man himself lurk the elements of ancestral courage and power, which in earlier life would have fitted him for one of us. Earth holds but few to whom nature has given the qualities that can bear the ordeal! But time and excess, that have thickened the grosser senses, have blunted the imagination. I relinquish him to his doom."

"And still then, Mejnour, you cherish the desire to increase our scanty and scattered host by new converts and allies; surely, surely, thy experience might have taught thee that scarcely once in a thousand years is born the being who can pass through the horrible gates that lead into the worlds without. Is not thy path already strewn with thy victims? Do not their ghastly faces of agony and fear,—the blood-

stained suicide, the raving maniac, — rise before thee and warn what is yet left to thee of human sympathy from thy insane ambition ? ”

“Nay,” answered Mejnour, “have I not had success to counterbalance failure ? And can I forego this lofty and august hope, worthy alone of our high condition, — the hope to form a mighty and numerous race, with a force and power sufficient to permit them to acknowledge to mankind their majestic conquests and dominion ; to become the true lords of this planet, invaders perchance of others, masters of the inimical and malignant tribes by which at this moment we are surrounded, — a race that may proceed, in their deathless destinies, from stage to stage of celestial glory, and rank at last among the nearest ministrants and agents gathered round the Throne of Thrones ? What matter a thousand victims for one convert to our band ? And you, Zicci,” continued Mejnour, after a pause, “you, even you, should this affection for a mortal beauty that you have dared, despite yourself, to cherish, be more than a passing fancy ; should it, once admitted into your inmost nature, partake of its bright and enduring essence, — even you may brave all things to raise the beloved one into your equal. Nay, interrupt me not. Can you see sickness menace her, danger hover around, years creep on, the eyes grow dim, the beauty fade, while the heart, youthful still, clings and fastens round your own, — can you see this, and know it is yours to — ”

“Cease,” cried Zicci, fiercely. “What is all other fate as compared to the death of terror ? What ! when the coldest sage, the most heated enthusiast, the hardiest warrior, with his nerves of iron, have been found dead in their beds, with straining eyeballs and horrent hair, at the first step of the Dread Progress, thinkest thou that this weak woman — from whose cheek a sound at the window, the screech of the night-owl, the sight of a drop of blood on a man’s sword, would start the color — could brave one glance of — Away ! the very thought of such sights for her makes even myself a coward ! ”

“When you told her you loved her, when you clasped her

to your breast, you renounced all power to prophesy her future lot or protect her from harm. Henceforth to her you are human, and human only. How know you, then, to what you may be tempted? How know you what her curiosity may learn and her courage brave? But enough of this, — you are bent on your pursuit?"

"The fiat has gone forth."

"And to-morrow?"

"To-morrow at this hour our bark will be bounding over yonder ocean, and the weight of ages will have fallen from my heart! Fool, *thou* hast given up *thy* youth!"

---

## CHAPTER XVI.

THE Prince di — was not a man whom Naples could suppose to be addicted to superstitious fancies, neither was the age one in which the belief of sorcery was prevalent. Still, in the South of Italy there was then, and there still lingers, a certain spirit of credulity, which may, ever and anon, be visible amidst the boldest dogmas of their philosophers and sceptics. In his childhood the Prince had learned strange tales of the ambition, the genius, and the career of his grandsire; and secretly, perhaps influenced by ancestral example, in earlier youth he himself had followed alchemy, not only through her legitimate course, but her antiquated and erratic windings. I have, indeed, been shown in Naples a little volume blazoned with the arms of the Visconti, and ascribed to the nobleman I refer to, which treats of alchemy in a spirit half mocking and half reverential.

Pleasure soon distracted him from such speculations, and his talents, which were unquestionably great, were wholly perverted to extravagant intrigues or to the embellishment of a gorgeous ostentation with something of classic grace. His

immense wealth, his imperious pride, his unscrupulous and daring character, made him an object of no inconsiderable fear to a feeble and timid court; and the ministers of the indolent government willingly connived at excesses which allured him at least from ambition. The strange visit and yet more strange departure of Mejnour filled the breast of the Neapolitan with awe and wonder, against which all the haughty arrogance and learned scepticism of his maturer manhood combated in vain. The apparition of Mejnour served, indeed, to invest Zicci with a character in which the Prince had not hitherto regarded him. He felt a strange alarm at the rival he had braved, at the foe he had provoked. His night was sleepless, and the next morning he came to the resolution of leaving Isabel in peace until after the banquet of that day, to which he had invited Zicci. He felt as if the death of the mysterious Corsican were necessary for the preservation of his own life; and if at an earlier period of their rivalry he had determined on the fate of Zicci, the warnings of Mejnour only served to confirm his resolve.

"We will try if his magic can invent an antidote to the bane," said he, half aloud and with a gloomy smile, as he summoned Mascari to his presence. The poison which the Prince, with his own hands, mixed into the wine intended for his guest was compounded from materials the secret of which had been one of the proudest heir-looms of that able and evil race which gave to Italy her wisest and fellest tyrants. Its operation was quick, not sudden; it produced no pain, it left on the form no grim convulsion, on the skin no purpling spot, to arouse suspicion; you might have cut and carved every membrane and fibre of the corpse, but the sharpest eyes of the leech would not have detected the presence of the subtle life-queller. For twelve hours the victim felt nothing, save a joyous and elated exhilaration of the blood; a delicious languor followed, — the sure forerunner of apoplexy. No lancet then could save! Apoplexy had run much in the families of the enemies of the Visconti!

The hour of the feast arrived, the guests assembled. There were the flower of the Neapolitan *seigneurie*, — the descendants

of the Norman, the Teuton, the Goth; for Naples had then a nobility, but derived it from the North, which has indeed been the *Nutrix Leonum*, the nurse of the lion-hearted chivalry of the world.

Last of the guests came Zicci, and the crowd gave way as the dazzling foreigner moved along to the lord of the palace. The Prince greeted him with a meaning smile, to which Zicci answered by a whisper: "He who plays with loaded dice does not always win."

The Prince bit his lip; and Zicci, passing on, seemed deep in conversation with the fawning Mascari.

"Who is the Prince's heir?" asked the Corsican.

"A distant relation on the mother's side; with his Excellency dies the male line."

"Is the heir present at our host's banquet?"

"No; they are not friends."

"No matter; he will be here to-morrow!"

Mascari stared in surprise; but the signal for the banquet was given, and the guests were marshalled to the board. As was the custom, the feast took place at midday. It was a long oval hall, the whole of one side opening by a marble colonnade upon a court or garden, in which the eye rested gratefully upon cool fountains and statues of whitest marble, half sheltered by orange-trees. Every art that luxury could invent to give freshness and coolness to the languid and breezeless heat of the day without (a day on which the breath of the sirocco was abroad) had been called into existence. Artificial currents of air through invisible tubes, silken blinds waving to and fro as if to cheat the senses into the belief of an April wind, and miniature *jets d'eau* in each corner of the apartment gave to the Italians the same sense of exhilaration and *comfort* (if I may use the word) which the well-drawn curtains and the blazing hearth afford to the children of colder climes.

The conversation was somewhat more lively and intellectual than is common among the languid pleasure-hunters of the South; for the Prince, himself accomplished, sought his acquaintance not only amongst the *beaux esprits* of his own country, but amongst the gay foreigners who adorned and re-



lieved the monotony of the Neapolitan circles. There were present two or three of the brilliant Frenchmen of the old *régime*, and their peculiar turn of thought and wit was well calculated for the meridian of a society that made the *dolce far niente* at once its philosophy and its faith. The Prince, however, was more silent than usual, and when he sought to rouse himself, his spirits were forced and exaggerated. To the manners of his host, those of Zicci afforded a striking contrast. The bearing of this singular person was at all times characterized by a calm and polished ease which was attributed by the courtiers to the long habit of society. He could scarcely be called gay, yet few persons more tended to animate the general spirits of a convivial circle. He seemed, by a kind of intuition, to elicit from each companion the qualities in which he most excelled; and a certain tone of latent mockery that characterized his remarks upon the topics on which the conversation fell, seemed to men who took nothing in earnest to be the language both of wit and wisdom. To the Frenchmen in particular there was something startling in his intimate knowledge of the minutest events in their own capital and country, and his profound penetration (evinced but in epigrams and sarcasms) into the eminent characters who were then playing a part upon the great stage of Continental intrigue. It was while this conversation grew animated, and the feast was at its height, that Glyndon (who, as the reader will recollect, had resolved, on learning from Cetoxa the capture of the actress, to seek the Prince himself) arrived at the palace. The porter, perceiving by his dress that he was not one of the invited guests, told him that his Excellency was engaged, and on no account could be disturbed; and Glyndon then, for the first time, became aware of how strange and embarrassing was the duty he had taken on himself. To force an entrance into the banquet-hall of a great and powerful noble surrounded by the rank of Naples, and to arraign him for what to his boon companions would appear but an act of gallantry, was an exploit that could not fail to be at once ludicrous and impotent. He mused a moment; and remembering that Zicci was among the guests, determined to apply him-

self to the Corsican. He therefore, slipping a few crowns into the porter's hand, said that he was commissioned to seek the Signor Zicci upon an errand of life and death, and easily won his way across the court and into the interior building. He passed up the broad staircase, and the voices and merriment of the revellers smote his ear at a distance. At the entrance of the reception-rooms he found a page, whom he despatched with a message to Zicci. The page did the errand; and the Corsican, on hearing the whispered name of Glyndon, turned to his host.

"Pardon me, my lord, an English friend of mine, the Signor Glyndon (not unknown by name to your Excellency), waits without. The business must indeed be urgent on which he has sought me in such an hour. You will forgive my momentary absence."

"Nay, signor," answered the Prince, courteously, but with a sinister smile on his countenance, "would it not be better for your friend to join us? An Englishman is welcome everywhere; and even were he a Dutchman, your friendship would invest his presence with attraction. Pray his attendance, — we would not spare you even for a moment."

Zicci bowed. The page was despatched with all flattering messages to Glyndon, a seat next to Zicci was placed for him, and the young Englishman entered.

"You are most welcome, sir. I trust your business to our illustrious guest is of good omen and pleasant import. If you bring evil news, defer it, I pray you."

Glyndon's brow was sullen, and he was about to startle the guests by his reply, when Zicci, touching his arm significantly, whispered in English, "I know why you have sought me. Be silent, and witness what ensues."

"You know, then, that Isabel, whom you boasted you had the power to save from danger —"

"Is in this house? Yes. I know also that Murder sits at the right hand of our host. Be still, and learn the fate that awaits the foes of Zicci."

"My lord," said the Corsican, speaking aloud, "the Signor Glyndon has indeed brought me tidings which, though not un-

expected, are unwelcome. I learn that which will oblige me to leave Naples to-morrow, though I trust but for a short time. I have now a new motive to make the most of the present hour."

"And what, if I may venture to ask, may be the cause which brings such affliction on the fair dames of Naples?"

"It is the approaching death of one who honored me with most loyal friendship," replied Zicci, gravely. "Let us not speak of it, — Grief cannot put back the dial. As we supply by new flowers those that fade in our vases, so it is the secret of worldly wisdom to replace by fresh friendships those that fade from our path."

"True philosophy," exclaimed the Prince. "'Not to admire' was the Roman's maxim; never to mourn is mine. There is nothing in life to grieve for, — save, indeed, Signor Zicci, when some beauty on whom we have set our heart slips from our grasp. In such a moment we have need of all our wisdom not to succumb to despair and shake hands with death. What say you, signor? You smile. Such never could be your lot. Pledge me in a sentiment: 'Long life to the fortunate lover; a quick release to the baffled suitor!'"

"I pledge you," said Zicci. And as the fatal wine was poured into his glass, he repeated, fixing his eyes on the Prince, "I pledge you even in this wine!"

He lifted the glass to his lips. The Prince seemed ghastly pale, while the gaze of the Corsican bent upon him with an intent and stern brightness that the conscience-stricken host cowered and quailed beneath. Not till he had drained the draught and replaced the glass upon the board did Zicci turn his eyes from the Prince; and he then said, "Your wine has been kept too long, — it has lost its virtues. It might disagree with many; but do not fear, it will not harm me, Prince. Signor Mascari, you are a judge of the grape, will you favor us with your opinion?"

"Nay," answered Mascari, with well-affected composure, "I like not the wines of Cyprus, they are heating. Perhaps Signor Glyndon may not have the same distaste. The English are said to love their potations warm and pungent."

"Do you wish my friend also to taste the wine, Prince?" said Zicci. "Recollect all cannot drink it with the same impunity as myself."

"No," said the Prince, hastily; "if you do not recommend the wine, Heaven forbid that we should constrain our guests! My Lord Duke," turning to one of the Frenchmen, "yours is the true soil of Bacchus. What think you of this cask from Burgundy, — has it borne the journey?"

"Ah!" said Zicci, "let us change both the wine and the theme." With that the Corsican grew more animated and brilliant. Never did wit more sparkling, airy, exhilarating, flash from the lips of reveller. His spirits fascinated all present, even the Prince himself, even Glyndon, with a strange and wild contagion. The former, indeed, whom the words and gaze of Zicci, when he drained the poison, had filled with fearful misgivings, now hailed in the brilliant eloquence of his wit a certain sign of the operation of the bane. The wine circulated fast, but none seemed conscious of its effects. One by one the rest of the party fell into a charmed and spell-bound silence as Zicci continued to pour forth sally upon sally, tale upon tale. They hung on his words, they almost held their breath to listen. Yet how bitter was his mirth; how full of contempt for all things; how deeply steeped in the coldness of the derision that makes sport of life itself!

Night came on; the room grew dim, and the feast had lasted several hours longer than was the customary duration of similar entertainments at that day. Still the guests stirred not, and still Zicci continued, with glittering eye and mocking lip, to lavish his stores of intellect and anecdote, when suddenly the moon rose, and shed its rays over the flowers and fountains in the court without, leaving the room itself half in shadow and half tinged by a quiet and ghostly light.

It was then that Zicci rose. "Well, gentlemen," said he, "we have not yet wearied our host, I hope, and his garden offers a new temptation to protract our stay. Have you no musicians among your train, Prince, that might regale our ears while we inhale the fragrance of your orange-trees?"

"An excellent thought," said the Prince. "Mascari, see to the music."

The party rose simultaneously to adjourn to the garden; and then, for the first time, the effect of the wine they had drunk seemed to make itself felt.

With flushed cheeks and unsteady steps they came into the open air, which tended yet more to stimulate that glowing fever of the grape. As if to make up for the silence with which the guests had hitherto listened to Zicci, every tongue was now loosened; every man talked, no man listened. In the serene beauty of the night and scene there was something wild and fearful in the contrast of the hubbub and Babel of these disorderly roysterers. One of the Frenchmen in especial, the young Duc de R——, — a nobleman of the highest rank, and of all the quick, vivacious, and irascible temperament of his countrymen, — was particularly noisy and excited. And as circumstances, the remembrance of which is still preserved among certain circles of Naples, rendered it afterwards necessary that the Duc should himself give evidence of what occurred, I will here translate the short account he drew up, and which was kindly submitted to me some few years ago by my accomplished and lively friend, il Cavaliere di B——.

I never remember [writes the Duc] to have felt my spirits so excited as on that evening; we were like so many boys released from school, jostling each other as we reeled or ran down the flight of seven or eight stairs that led from the colonnade into the garden, — some laughing, some whooping, some scolding, some babbling. The wine had brought out, as it were, each man's inmost character. Some were loud and quarrelsome, others sentimental and whining; some, whom we had hitherto thought dull, most mirthful; some, whom we had ever regarded as discreet and taciturn, most garrulous and uproarious. I remember that in the midst of our most clamorous gayety my eye fell upon the foreign cavalier, Signor Zicci, whose conversation had so enchanted us all, and I felt a certain chill come over me to perceive that he bore the same calm and unsympathizing smile upon his countenance which had characterized it in his singular and curious stories of the court of Louis XV. I felt, indeed, half inclined to seek a quarrel with one whose composure was almost an insult to our disorder. Nor was such an effect of this irritating and mocking tranquillity confined to myself

alone. Several of the party have told me since that on looking at Zicci they felt their blood rise and their hands wander to their sword-hilts. There seemed in the icy smile a very charm to wound vanity and provoke rage. It was at this moment that the Prince came up to me, and, passing his arm into mine, led me a little apart from the rest. He had certainly indulged in the same excess as ourselves, but it did not produce the same effect of noisy excitement. There was, on the contrary, a certain cold arrogance and supercilious scorn in his bearing and language, which, even while affecting so much caressing courtesy towards me, roused my self-love against him. He seemed as if Zicci had infected him, and that in imitating the manner of his guest he surpassed the original. He rallied me on some court gossip which had honored my name by associating it with a certain beautiful and distinguished Sicilian lady, and affected to treat with contempt that which, had it been true, I should have regarded as a boast. He spoke, indeed, as if he himself had gathered all the flowers of Naples, and left us foreigners only the gleanings he had scorned; at this my natural and national gallantry was piqued, and I retorted by some sarcasms that I should certainly have spared had my blood been cooler. He laughed heartily, and left me in a strange fit of resentment and anger. Perhaps (I must own the truth) the wine had produced in me a wild disposition to take offence and provoke quarrel. As the Prince left me, I turned, and saw Zicci at my side.

"The Prince is a braggart," said he, with the same smile that displeased me before. "He would monopolize all fortune and all love. Let us take our revenge."

"And how?"

"He has at this moment in his house the most enchanting singer in Naples, — the celebrated Isabel di Pisani. She is here, it is true, not by her own choice, — he carried her hither by force; but he will pretend to swear that she adores him. Let us insist on his producing the secret treasure; and when she enters, the Duc de R—— can have no doubt that his flatteries and attentions will charm the lady and provoke all the jealous fears of our host. It would be a fair revenge upon his imperious self-conceit."

This suggestion delighted me. I hastened to the Prince. At that instant the musicians had just commenced. I waved my hand, ordered the music to stop, and addressing the Prince, who was standing in the centre of one of the gayest groups, complained of his want of hospitality in affording to us such poor proficient in the art while he reserved for his own solace the lute and voice of the first performer in Naples. I demanded, half laughingly, half seriously, that he should produce the

Pisani. My demand was received with shouts of applause by the rest. We drowned the replies of our host with uproar, and would hear no denial. "Gentlemen," at last said the Prince, when he could obtain an audience, "even were I to assent to your proposal, I could not induce the signora to present herself before an assemblage as riotous as they are noble. You have too much chivalry to use compulsion with her, though the Duc de R—— forgets himself sufficiently to administer it to me."

I was stung by this taunt, however well deserved. "Prince," said I, "I have for the indelicacy of compulsion so illustrious an example that I cannot hesitate to pursue the path honored by your own footsteps. All Naples knows that the Pisani despises at once your gold and your love; that force alone could have brought her under your roof; and that you refuse to produce her because you fear her complaints, and know enough of the chivalry your vanity sneers at to feel assured that the gentlemen of France are not more disposed to worship beauty than to defend it from wrong."

"You speak well, sir," said Zicci, gravely; "the Prince dare not produce his prize."

The Prince remained speechless for a few moments, as if with indignation. At last he broke out into expressions the most injurious and insulting against Signor Zicci and myself. Zicci replied not; I was more hot and hasty. The guests appeared to delight in our dispute. None except Mascari, whom we pushed aside and disdained to hear, strove to conciliate; some took one side, some another. The issue may be well foreseen. Swords were drawn. I had left mine in the ante-room; Zicci offered me his own, — I seized it eagerly. There might be some six or eight persons engaged in a strange and confused kind of *mêlée*, but the Prince and myself only sought each other. The noise around us, the confusion of the guests, the cries of the musicians, the clash of our own swords, only served to stimulate our unhappy fury. We feared to be interrupted by the attendants, and fought like madmen, without skill or method. I thrust and parried mechanically, blind and frantic as if a demon had entered into me, till I saw the Prince stretched at my feet, bathed in his blood, and Zicci bending over him and whispering in his ear. The sight cooled us all; the strife ceased. We gathered in shame, remorse, and horror round our ill-fated host; but it was too late, his eyes rolled fearfully in his head, and still he struggled to release himself from Zicci's arms, who continued to whisper (I trust divine comfort) in his ear. I have seen men die, but never one who wore such horror on his countenance. At last all was over; Zicci rose from the corpse, and taking, with great composure, his sword from my

hand, — "Ye are witnesses, gentlemen," said he, calmly, "that the Prince brought his fate upon himself. The last of that illustrious house has perished in a brawl."

I saw no more of Zicci. I hastened to the French ambassador to narrate the event and abide the issue. I am grateful to the Neapolitan government and to the illustrious heir of the unfortunate nobleman for the lenient and generous, yet just, interpretation put upon a misfortune the memory of which will afflict me to the last hour of my life.

(Signed)

LOUIS VICTOR, DUC DE R.

In the above memorial the reader will find the most exact and minute account yet given of an event which created the most lively sensation at Naples in that day, and the narration of which first induced me to collect the materials of this history, which the reader will perceive, as it advances, is altogether different in its nature, its agencies, and its aims from those tales of external terror, whether derived from ingenious imposture or supernatural mystery, that have given life to French melodrama or German romance.

---

## CHAPTER XVII.

GLYNDON had taken no part in the affray, neither had he participated largely in the excesses of the revel. For his exemption from both he was perhaps indebted to the whispered exhortations of Zicci. When the last rose from the corpse and withdrew from that scene of confusion, Glyndon remarked that in passing the crowd he touched Mascari on the shoulder, and said something which the Englishman did not overhear. Glyndon followed Zicci into the banquet-room, which, save where the moonlight slept on the marble floor, was wrapped in the sad and gloomy shadows of the advancing night.

"How could you foretell this fearful event? He fell not by your arm," said Glyndon, in a tremulous and hollow tone.

"The general who calculates on the victory does not fight



in person," answered Zicci. "But enough of this. Meet me at midnight by the seashore, half a mile to the left of your hôtel, — you will know the spot by a rude pillar, the only one near —, to which a broken chain is attached. There and then will be the crisis of your fate; go. I have business here yet, — remember, Isabel is still in the house of the dead man."

As Glyndon yet hesitated, strange thoughts, doubts, and fears that longed for speech crowding within him, Mascari approached; and Zicci, turning to the Italian and waving his hand to Glyndon, drew the former aside. Glyndon slowly departed.

"Mascari," said Zicci, "your patron is no more. Your services will be valueless to his heir, — a sober man, whom poverty has preserved from vice. For yourself, thank me that I do not give you up to the executioner, — recollect the wine of Cyprus. Well, never tremble, man, it could not act on me, though it might re-act on others, — in that it is a common type of crime. I forgive you; and if the wine should kill me, I promise you that my ghost shall not haunt so worshipful a penitent. Enough of this. Conduct me to the chamber of Isabel di Pisani; you have no further need of her. The death of the jailer opens the cell of the captive. Be quick, — I would be gone." Mascari muttered some inaudible words, bowed low, and led the way to the chamber in which Isabel was confined.

---

## CHAPTER XVIII.

It wanted several minutes of midnight, and Glyndon repaired to the appointed spot. The mysterious empire which Zicci had acquired over him was still more solemnly confirmed by the events of the last few hours; the sudden fate of the

Prince, so deliberately foreshadowed, and yet so seemingly accidental — brought out by causes the most commonplace, and yet associated with words the most prophetic, — impressed him with the deepest sentiments of admiration and awe. It was as if this dark and wondrous being would convert the most ordinary events and the meanest instruments into the agencies of his inscrutable will; yet, if so, why have permitted the capture of Isabel? Why not have prevented the crime rather than punished the criminal? And did Zicci really feel love for Isabel? Love, and yet offer to resign her to himself, — to a rival whom his arts could not fail to baffle? He no longer reverted to the belief that Zicci or Isabel had sought to dupe him into marriage. His fear and reverence for the former now forbade the notion of so poor an imposture. Did he any longer love Isabel himself? No. When, that morning, he heard of her danger, he had, it is true, returned to the sympathies and the fears of affection; but with the death of the Prince her image faded again from his heart, and he felt no jealous pang at the thought that she had been saved by Zicci, — that at that moment she was perhaps beneath his roof. Whoever has, in the course of his life, indulged the absorbing passion of the gamester, will remember how all other pursuits and objects vanished from his mind; how solely he was wrapped in the one wild delusion; with what a sceptre of magic power the despot demon ruled every feeling and every thought. Far more intense than the passion of the gamester was the frantic yet sublime desire that mastered the breast of Glyndon. He would be the rival of Zicci, not in human and perishable affections, but in preternatural and eternal lore. He would have laid down life with content, nay, rapture, as the price of learning those solemn secrets which separated the stranger from mankind. Such fools are we when we aspire to be over-wise! To be enamoured too madly of the goddess of goddesses is only to embrace a cloud, and to forfeit alike heaven and earth.

The night was most lovely and serene, and the waves scarcely rippled at his feet as the Englishman glided on by the cool and starry beach. At length he arrived at the spot,

and there, leaning against the broken pillar, he beheld a man wrapped in a long mantle and in an attitude of profound repose. He approached, and uttered the name of Zicci. The figure turned, and he saw the face of a stranger, — a face not stamped by the glorious beauty of the Corsican, but equally majestic in its aspect, and perhaps still more impressive from the mature age and the passionless depth of thought that characterized the expanded forehead and deep-set but piercing eyes.

"You seek Zicci," said the stranger, — "he will be here anon; but perhaps he whom you see before you is more connected with your destiny, and more disposed to realize your dreams."

"Hath the earth then another Zicci?"

"If not," replied the stranger, "why do you cherish the hope and the wild faith to be yourself a Zicci? Think you that none others have burned with the same godlike dream? Who, indeed, in his first youth, — youth, when the soul is nearer to the heaven from which it sprang, and its divine and primal longings are not all effaced by the sordid passions and petty cares that are begot in time? — who is there in youth that has not nourished the belief that the universe has secrets not known to the common herd, and panted, as the hart for the water-springs, for the fountains that lie hid and far away amidst the broad wilderness of trackless science? The music of the fountain is heard in the soul within till the steps, deceived and erring, rove away from its waters, and the wanderer dies in the mighty desert. Think you that none who have cherished the hope have found the truth, or that the yearning after the Ineffable Knowledge was given to us utterly in vain? No. Every desire in human hearts is but a glimpse of things that exist, alike distant and divine. No! in the world there have been, from age to age, some brighter and happier spirits who have won to the air in which the beings above mankind move and breathe. Zicci, great though he be, stands not alone; he has his predecessors, his contemporary rivals, and long lines of successors are yet to come!"

"And will you tell me," said Glyndon, "that in yourself I

behold one of that mighty few over whom Zicci has no superiority in power and wisdom ? ”

“ In me,” answered the stranger, “ you see one from whom Zicci himself learned many of his loftiest secrets. Before his birth my wisdom was ! On these shores, on this spot, have I stood in ages that your chronicles but feebly reach. The Phœnician, the Greek, the Oscan, the Roman, the Lombard, — I have seen them all ! — leaves gay and glittering on the trunk of the universal life — scattered in due season and again renewed ; till, indeed, the same race that gave its glory to the ancient world bestowed a second youth on the new. For the pure Greeks — the Hellenes, whose origin has bewildered your dreaming scholars — were of the same great family as the Norman tribe, born to be the lords of the universe, and in no land on earth destined to be the hewers of wood. Even the dim traditions of the learned that bring the sons of Hellas from the vast and undetermined territories of Northern Thrace, to be the victors of the pastoral Pelasgi, and the founders of the line of demi-gods, might serve you to trace back their primeval settlements to the same region whence, in later times, the Norman warriors broke on the dull and savage hordes of the Celt, and became the Greeks of the Christian world. But this interests you not, and you are wise in your indifference. Not in the knowledge of things without, but in the perfection of the soul within, lies the empire of man aspiring to be more than men.”

“ And what books contain that science ; from what laboratory is it wrought ? ”

“ Nature supplies the materials : they are around you in your daily walks ; in the herbs that the beast devours and the chemist disdains to cull ; in the elements, from which matter in its meanest and its mightiest shapes is deduced ; in the wide bosom of the air ; in the black abysses of the earth, — everywhere are given to mortals the resources and libraries of immortal lore. But as the simplest problems in the simplest of all studies are obscure to one who braces not his mind to their comprehension ; as the rower in yonder vessel cannot tell you why two circles can touch each other only in one

point, — so, though all earth were carved over and inscribed with the letters of diviner knowledge, the characters would be valueless to him who does not pause to inquire the language and meditate the truth. Young man, if thy imagination is vivid, if thy heart is daring, if thy curiosity is insatiate, I will accept thee as my pupil. But the first lessons are stern and dread.”

“If thou hast mastered them, why not I?” answered Glyndon, boldly. “I have felt from my boyhood that strange mysteries were reserved for my career, and from the proudest ends of ordinary ambition I have carried my gaze into the cloud and darkness that stretch beyond. The instant I beheld Zicci, I felt as if I had discovered the guide and the tutor for which my youth had idly languished and vainly burned.”

“And to me his duty can be transferred,” replied the stranger. “Yonder lies, anchored in the bay, the vessel in which Zicci seeks a fairer home; a little while and the breeze will rise, the sail will swell, and the stranger will have passed like a wind away. Still, like the wind, he leaves in thy heart the seeds that may bear the blossom and the fruit. Zicci hath performed his task — he is wanted no more; the perfecter of his work is at thy side. He comes — I hear the dash of the oar. You will have your choice submitted to you. According as you decide, we shall meet again.” With these words the stranger moved slowly away, and disappeared beneath the shadow of the cliffs. A boat glided rapidly across the waters; it touched land, a man leapt on shore, and Glyndon recognized Zicci.

“I give thee, Glyndon, I give thee no more the option of happy love and serene enjoyment. That hour is past, and fate has linked the hand that might have been thine own to mine. But I have ample gifts to bestow upon thee if thou wilt abandon the hope that gnaws thy heart, and the realization of which even I have not the power to foresee. Be thine ambition human, and I can gratify it to the full. Men desire four things in life, — love, wealth, fame, power. The first I cannot give thee, — no matter why; the rest are at my disposal. Select which of them thou wilt, and let us part in peace.”

"Such are not the gifts I covet: I choose knowledge, which indeed, as the schoolman said, *is* power, and the loftiest; that knowledge must be thine own. For this, and for this alone, I surrendered the love of Isabel; this, and this alone, must be my recompense."

"I cannot gainsay thee, though I can warn. The desire to learn does not always contain the faculty to acquire. I can give thee, it is true, the teacher; the rest must depend on thee. Be wise in time, and take that which I can assure to thee."

"Answer me but these questions, and according to your answer I will decide. Is it in the power of man to attain intercourse with the beings of other worlds? Is it in the power of man to read the past and the future, and to insure life against the sword and against disease?"

"All this may be possible," answered Zicci evasively, "to the few. But for one who attains such secrets, millions may perish in the attempt."

"One question more. Thou —"

"Beware! Of myself, as I have said before, I render no account."

"Well, then, the stranger I have met this night — are his boasts to be believed? Is he in truth one of the chosen seers whom you allow to have mastered the mysteries I yearn to fathom?"

"Rash man," said Zicci, in a tone of compassion, "thy crisis is past, and thy choice made. I can only bid thee be bold and prosper. Yes, I resign thee to a master who *has* the power and the will to open to thee the gates of the awful world. Thy weal or woe are as nought in the eyes of his relentless wisdom. I would bid him spare thee, but he will heed me not. Mejnour, receive thy pupil!" Glyndon turned, and his heart beat when he perceived that the stranger, whose footsteps he had not heard on the pebbles, whose approach he had not beheld in the moonlight, was once more by his side.

Glyndon's eyes followed the receding form of the mysterious Corsican. He saw him enter the boat, and he then for the first time noticed that besides the rowers there was a

female, who stood up as Zicci gained the boat. Even at this distance he recognized the once-adored form of Isabel. She waved her hand to him, and across the still and shining air came her voice, mournfully and sweetly in her native tongue, "Farewell, Clarence — farewell, farewell."

He strove to answer, but the voice touched a chord at his heart, and the words failed him. Isabel was then lost forever, — gone with this dread stranger, — darkness was round her lot. And he himself had decided her fate and his own! The boat bounded on, the soft waves flashed and sparkled beneath the oars, and it was along one sapphire track of moonlight that the frail vessel bore away the lovers. Farther and farther from his gaze sped the boat, till at last the speck, scarcely visible, touched the side of the ship that lay lifeless in the glorious bay. At that instant, as if by magic, up sprang with a glad murmur the playful and refreshing wind. And Glyndon turned to Mejnour, and broke the silence.

"Tell me, — if thou canst read the future, — tell me that *her* lot will be fair, and that *her* choice at least is wise."

"My pupil," answered Mejnour, in a voice the calmness of which well accorded with the chilling words, "thy first task must be to withdraw all thought, feeling, sympathy from others. The elementary stage of knowledge is to make self, and self alone, thy study and thy world. Thou hast decided thine own career; thou hast renounced love; thou hast rejected wealth, fame, and the vulgar pomps of power. What, then, are all mankind to thee? To perfect thy faculties and concentrate thy emotions is henceforth thy only aim."

"And will happiness be the end?"

"If happiness exist," answered Mejnour, "it must be centred in A SELF to which all passion is unknown. But happiness is the last state of being, and as yet thou art on the threshold of the first!"

As Mejnour spoke, the distant vessel spread its sails to the wind, and moved slowly along the deep. Glyndon sighed, and the pupil and the master retraced their steps towards the city.

## BOOK II.

---

### CHAPTER I.

It was about a month after the date of Zicci's departure and Glyndon's introduction to Mejnour, when two Englishmen were walking arm-in-arm through the Toledo.

"I tell you," said one (who spoke warmly), "that if you have a particle of common-sense left in you, you will accompany me to England. This Mejnour is an impostor more dangerous — because more in earnest — than Zicci. After all, what do his promises amount to? You allow that nothing can be more equivocal. You say that he has left Naples, that he has selected a retreat more genial than the crowded thoroughfares of men to the studies in which he is to initiate you; and this retreat is among the haunts of the fiercest bandits of Italy, — haunts which Justice itself dare not penetrate; fitting hermitage for a sage! I tremble for you. What if this stranger, of whom nothing is known, be leagued with the robbers; and these lures for your credulity bait but the traps for your property, — perhaps your life? You might come off cheaply by a ransom of half your fortune; you smile indignantly: well! put common-sense out of the question; take your own view of the matter. You are to undergo an ordeal which Mejnour himself does not profess to describe as a very tempting one. It may, or it may not, succeed; if it does not, you are menaced with the darkest evils; and if it does, you cannot be better off than the dull and joyless mystic whom you have taken for a master. Away with this folly! Enjoy youth while it is left to you. Return with me to England; forget these dreams. Enter your proper career; form affections more



respectable than those which lured you a while to an Italian adventuress, and become a happy and distinguished man. This is the advice of sober friendship; yet the promises I hold out to you are fairer than those of Mejnour."

"Merton," said Glyndon, doggedly, "I cannot, if I would, yield to your wishes. A power that is above me urges me on; I cannot resist its fascination. I will proceed to the last in the strange career I have commenced. Think of me no more. Follow yourself the advice you give to me, and be happy."

"This is madness," said Merton, passionately, but with a tear in his eye; "your health is already failing; you are so changed I should scarcely know you: come, I have already had your name entered in my passport; in another hour I shall be gone, and you, boy that you are, will be left without a friend to the deceptions of your own fancy and the machinations of this relentless mountebank."

"Enough," said Glyndon, coldly; "you cease to be an effective counsellor when you suffer your prejudices to be thus evident. I have already had ample proof," added the Englishman, and his pale cheek grew more pale, "of the power of this man, — if man he be, which I sometimes doubt; and, come life, come death, I will not shrink from the paths that allure me. Farewell, Merton: if we never meet again; if you hear amidst our old and cheerful haunts that Clarence Glyndon sleeps the last sleep by the shores of Naples, or amidst the Calabrian hills, — say to the friends of our youth, 'He died worthily, as thousands of martyr-students have died before him, in the pursuit of knowledge.'"

He wrung Merton's hand as he spoke, darted from his side, and disappeared amidst the crowd.

That day Merton left Naples; the next morning Glyndon also quitted the City of Delight, alone and on horseback. He bent his way into those picturesque but dangerous parts of the country which at that time were infested by banditti, and which few travellers dared to pass, even in broad daylight, without a strong escort. A road more lonely cannot well be conceived than that on which the hoofs of his steed, striking upon the fragments of rock that encumbered the neglected

way, woke a dull and melancholy echo. Large tracts of waste land, varied by the rank and profuse foliage of the South, lay before him ; occasionally a wild goat peeped down from some rocky crag, or the discordant cry of a bird of prey, startled in its sombre haunt, was heard above the hills. These were the only signs of life ; not a human being was met, not a hut was visible. Wrapped in his own ardent and solemn thoughts, the young man continued his way, till the sun had spent its noon-day heat, and a breeze that announced the approach of eve sprung up from the unseen ocean that lay far distant to his sight. It was then that a turn in the road brought before him one of those long, desolate, gloomy villages which are found in the interior of the Neapolitan dominions ; and now he came upon a small chapel on one side of the road, with a gaudily painted image of the Virgin in the open shrine. Around this spot, which in the heart of a Christian land retained the vestige of the old idolatry (for just such were the chapels that in the Pagan age were dedicated to the demon-saints of mythology), gathered six or seven miserable and squalid wretches, whom the Curse of the Leper had cut off from mankind. They set up a shrill cry as they turned their ghastly visages towards the horseman ; and, without stirring from the spot, stretched out their gaunt arms, and implored charity in the name of the Merciful Mother. Glyndon hastily threw them some small coins, and, turning away his face, clapped spurs to his horse, and relaxed not his speed till he entered the village. On either side the narrow and miry street, fierce and haggard forms — some leaning against the ruined walls of blackened huts, some seated at the threshold, some lying at full length in the mud — presented groups that at once invoked pity and aroused alarm ; pity for their squalor, — alarm for the ferocity imprinted on their savage aspects. They gazed at him, grim and sullen, as he rode slowly up the rugged street ; sometimes whispering significantly to each other, but without attempting to stop his way. Even the children hushed their babble, and ragged urchins, devouring him with sparkling eyes, muttered to their mothers, " We shall feast well to-morrow ! " It was, indeed, one of those hamlets in which Law sets not its sober

step, in which Violence and Murder house secure, — hamlets common then in the wilder parts of Italy, in which the peasant was but the gentler name for the robber.

Glyndon's heart somewhat failed him as he looked around, and the question he desired to ask died upon his lips. At length, from one of the dismal cabins emerged a form superior to the rest. Instead of the patched and ragged overall which made the only garment of the men he had hitherto seen, the dress of this person was characterized by all the trappings of Calabrian bravery. Upon his raven hair, the glossy curls of which made a notable contrast to the matted and elfin locks of the savages around, was placed a cloth cap with a gold tassel that hung down to his shoulder; his mustaches were trimmed with care, and a silk kerchief of gay hues was twisted round a well-shaped but sinewy throat; a short jacket of rough cloth was decorated with several rows of gilt filagree buttons; his nether garments fitted tight to his limbs, and were curiously braided; while in a broad, party-colored sash were placed four silver-hilted pistols; and the sheathed knife, usually worn by Italians of the lower order, was mounted in ivory elaborately carved. A small carbine of handsome workmanship was slung across his shoulder, and completed his costume. The man himself was of middle size, athletic, yet slender; with straight and regular features, — sunburnt, but not swarthy; and an expression of countenance which, though reckless and bold, had in it frankness rather than ferocity, and, if defying, was not altogether unprepossessing.

Glyndon, after eyeing this figure for some moments with great attention, checked his rein, and asked in the provincial *patois*, with which he was tolerably familiar, the way to the "Castle of the Mountain."

The man lifted his cap as he heard the question, and, approaching Glyndon, laid his hand upon the neck of the horse, and said in a low voice, "Then you are the cavalier whom our patron the signor expected. He bade me wait for you here, and lead you to the castle. And indeed, signor, it might have been unfortunate if I had neglected to obey the command."

The man then, drawing a little aside, called out to the

bystanders in a loud voice, "Ho, ho, my friends, pay henceforth and forever all respect to this worshipful cavalier. He is the accepted guest of our blessed patron of the Castle of the Mountain. Long life to him! May he, like his host, be safe by day and by night, in the hill and on the waste, against the dagger and the bullet, in limb and in life! Cursed be he who touches a hair of his head, or a *baiocco* in his pouch. Now and forever we will protect and honor him; for the law or against the law; with the faith, and to the death. Amen. Amen!"

"Amen!" responded in wild chorus a hundred voices, and the scattered and straggling groups pressed up the street, nearer and nearer to the horseman.

"And that he may be known," continued the Englishman's strange protector, "to the eye and to the ear, I place around him the white sash, and I give him the sacred watchword, — '*Peace to the Brave.*' Signor, when you wear this sash, the proudest in these parts will bare the head and bend the knee. Signor, when you utter this watchword, the bravest hearts will be bound to your bidding. Desire you safety, or ask you revenge; to gain a beauty, or to lose a foe, speak but the word, and we are yours, we are yours! Is it not so, comrades?" And again the hoarse voices shouted, "Amen, amen!"

"Now, signor," whispered the bravo, in good Italian, "if you have a few coins to spare, scatter them amongst the crowd, and let us be gone."

Glyndon, not displeased at the concluding sentence, emptied his purse in the street; and while, with mingled oaths, blessings, shrieks, and yells, men, women, and children scrambled for the money, the bravo, taking the rein of the horse, led it a few paces through the village at a brisk trot, and then turning up a narrow lane to the left, in a few minutes neither houses nor men were visible, and the mountains closed their path on either side. It was then that, releasing the bridle and slackening his pace, the guide turned his dark eyes on Glyndon with an arch expression, and said, —

"Your Excellency was not, perhaps, prepared for the hearty welcome we have given you."

"Why, in truth, I *ought* to have been prepared for it, since my friend, to whose house I am bound, did not disguise from me the character of the neighborhood. And your name, my friend, if I may call you so?"

"Oh, no ceremonies with me, Excellency. In the village I am generally called Maestro Paulo. I had a surname once, though a very equivocal one; and I have forgotten that since I retired from the world."

"And was it from disgust, from poverty, or from some—some ebullition of passion which entailed punishment, that you betook yourself to the mountains?"

"Why, signor," said the bravo, with a gay laugh, "hermits of my class seldom love the confessional. However, I have no secrets while my step is in these defiles, my whistle in my pouch, and my carbine at my back." With that the robber, as if he loved permission to talk at his will, hemmed thrice, and began with much humor; though, as his tale proceeded, the memories it roused seemed to carry him further than he at first intended, and reckless and light-hearted ease gave way to that fierce and varied play of countenance and passion of gesture which characterize the emotions of his countrymen.

"I was born at Terracina,—a fair spot, is it not? My father was a learned monk, of high birth; my mother—Heaven rest her!—an innkeeper's pretty daughter. Of course there was no marriage in the case; and when I was born, the monk gravely declared my appearance to be miraculous. I was dedicated from my cradle to the altar; and my head was universally declared to be the orthodox shape for a cowl. As I grew up, the monk took great pains with my education, and I learned Latin and psalmody as soon as less miraculous infants learn crowing. Nor did the holy man's care stint itself to my interior accomplishments. Although vowed to poverty, he always contrived that my mother should have her pockets full; and between her pockets and mine there was soon established a clandestine communication; accordingly, at fourteen, I wore my cap on one side, stuck pistols in my belt, and assumed the swagger of a cavalier and a gallant. At that age my poor mother died; and about the

same period, my father, having written a 'History of the Pontifical Bulls,' in forty volumes, and being, as I said, of high birth, obtained a cardinal's hat. From that time he thought fit to disown your humble servant. He bound me over to an honest notary at Naples, and gave me two hundred crowns by way of provision. Well, signor, I saw enough of the law to convince me that I should never be rogue enough to shine in the profession. So instead of spoiling parchment, I made love to the notary's daughter. My master discovered our innocent amusement, and turned me out of doors,—that was disagreeable. But my Ninetta loved me, and took care that I should not lie out in the streets with the lazzaroni. Little jade, I think I see her now, with her bare feet, and her finger to her lips, opening the door in the summer nights, and bidding me creep softly into the kitchen, where — praised be the saints! — a flask and a *manchet* always awaited the hungry *amoroso*. At last, however, Ninetta grew cold. It is the way of the sex, signor. Her father found her an excellent marriage in the person of a withered picture-dealer. She took the spouse, and very properly clapped the door in the face of the lover. I was not disheartened, Excellency; no, not I. Women are plentiful while we are young. So, without a ducat in my pocket, or a crust for my teeth, I set out to seek my fortune on board of a Spanish merchantman. That was duller work than I expected: but luckily we were attacked by a pirate; half the crew were butchered, the rest captured. I was one of the last, — always in luck, you see, signor, monks' sons have a knack that way! The captain of the pirate took a fancy to me. 'Serve with us,' said he. 'Too happy,' said I. Behold me then a pirate. Oh jolly life! how I blest the old notary for turning me out of doors! What feasting! what fighting! what wooing! what quarrelling! Sometimes we ran ashore and enjoyed ourselves like princes; sometimes we lay in a calm for days together, on the loveliest sea that man ever traversed. And then, if the breeze rose, and a sail came in sight, who so merry as we? I passed three years in that charming profession, and then, signor, I grew ambitious. I caballed against the captain; I

wanted his post. One still night we struck the blow. The ship was like a log in the sea, — no land to be seen from the mast-head, the waves like glass, and the moon at its full. Up we rose, — thirty of us and more. Up we rose with a shout; we poured into the captain's cabin, — I at the head. The brave old boy had caught the alarm, and there he stood at the doorway, a pistol in each hand; and his one eye (he had only one) worse to meet than the pistols were.

“‘Yield,’ cried I, ‘your life shall be safe.’

“‘Take that,’ said he, and whiz went the pistol; but the saints took care of their own, and the ball passed by my cheek, and shot the boatswain behind me. I closed with the captain, and the other pistol went off without mischief in the struggle; such a fellow he was, six feet four without his shoes! Over we went, rolling each on the other. Santa Maria! — no time to get hold of one's knife. Meanwhile, all the crew were up, some for the captain, some for me; clashing and firing, and swearing and groaning, and now and then a heavy splash in the sea! Fine supper for the sharks that night! At last old Bilboa got uppermost: out flashed his knife; down it came, but not in my heart. No! I gave my left arm as a shield, and the blade went through and through up to the hilt, with the blood spirting up like the rain from a whale's nostril. With the weight of the blow the stout fellow came down, so that his face touched mine; with my right hand I caught him by the throat, turned him over like a lamb, signor, and faith it was soon all up with him; the boatswain's brother, a fat Dutchman, ran him through with a pike.

“‘Old fellow,’ said I, as he turned up his terrible eye to me, ‘I bear you no malice, but we must try to get on in the world, you know.’ The captain grinned and gave up the ghost. I went upon deck; what a sight! Twenty bold fellows stark and cold, and the moon sparkling on the puddles of blood as calmly as if it were water. Well, signor, the victory was ours, and the ship mine; I ruled merrily enough for six months. We then attacked a French ship twice our size; what sport it was! And we had not had a good fight so long: we were quite like virgins at it! We got the best of it, and

won ship and cargo. They wanted to pistol the captain: but that was against my laws; so we gagged him, for he scolded as loud as if we were married to him; left him and the rest of his crew on board our own vessel, which was terribly battered: clapped our black flag on the Frenchman's, and set off merrily, with a brisk wind in our favor. But luck deserted us on forsaking our own dear old ship. A storm came on; a plank struck; several of us escaped in the boats; we had lots of gold with us, but no water. For two days and two nights we suffered horribly: but at last we ran ashore near a French seaport; our sorry plight moved compassion, and as we had money we were not suspected; people only suspect the poor. Here we soon recovered our fatigues, rigged ourselves out gayly, and your humble servant was considered as noble a captain as ever walked deck. But now, alas, my fate would have it that I should fall in love with a silk-mercier's daughter. Ah! how I loved her, — the pretty Clara! Yes, I loved her so well, that I was seized with horror at my past life; I resolved to repent, to marry her, and settle down into an honest man. Accordingly, I summoned my messmates, told them my resolution, resigned my command, and persuaded them to depart. They were good fellows; engaged with a Dutchman, against whom I heard afterwards they made a successful mutiny, but I never saw them more. I had two thousand crowns still left; with this sum I obtained the consent of the silk-mercier, and it was agreed that I should become a partner in the firm. I need not say that no one suspected I had been so great a man, and I passed for a Neapolitan goldsmith's son instead of a cardinal's. I was very happy then, signor, very, — I could not have harmed a fly. Had I married Clara I had been as gentle a mercier as ever handled a measure."

The bravo paused a moment, and it was easy to see that he felt more than his words and tone betokened. "Well, well, we must not look back at the Past too earnestly, — the sunlight upon it makes one's eyes water. The day was fixed for our wedding, it approached; on the evening before the appointed day, Clara, her mother, her little sister, and myself were walking by the port, and as we looked on the sea I was



telling them old gossip tales of mermaids and sea-serpents, — when a red-faced bottle-nosed Frenchman clapped himself right before me, and placing his spectacles very deliberately astride his proboscis, echoed out, '*Sacré, mille tonnerres!* This is the damned pirate that boarded the "Niobe"!' "

"'None of your jests,' said I, mildly. 'Ho, ho,' said he. 'I can't be mistaken. Help there,' and he gripped me by the collar. I replied, as you may suppose, by laying him in the kennel; but it would not do. The French captain had a French lieutenant at his back, whose memory was as good as his master's. A crowd assembled; other sailors came up; the odds were against me. I slept that night in prison; and, in a few weeks afterwards, I was sent to the galleys. They had spared my life because the old Frenchman politely averred that I had made my crew spare his. You may believe that the oar and the chain were not to my taste. I, and two others, escaped; they took to the road, and have, no doubt, been long since broken on the wheel. I, soft soul, would not commit another crime to gain my bread, for Clara was still at my heart with her soft eyes; so, limiting my rogueries to the theft of a beggar's rags, which I compensated him by leaving my galley attire instead, I begged my way to the town where I left Clara. It was a clear winter's day when I approached the outskirts of the town. I had no fear of detection, for my beard and hair were as good as a mask. Oh, Mother of Mercy! there came across my way a funeral procession! There, now, you know it. I can tell you no more. She had died, perhaps of love, more likely of shame. Do you know how I spent that night? I will tell you; I stole a pickaxe from a mason's shed, and, all alone and unseen, under the frosty heavens I dug the fresh mould from the grave; I lifted the coffin; I wrenched the lid, I saw her again — again. Decay had not touched her. She was always pale in her life! I could have sworn she lived! It was a blessed thing to see her once more, — and all alone too! But then at dawn, to give her back to the earth, — to close the lid, to throw down the mould, to hear the pebbles rattle on the coffin, — that was dreadful! Signor, I never knew before, and I don't wish to think now,

how valuable a thing human life is. At sunrise I was again a wanderer; but now that Clara was gone my scruples vanished, and again I was at war with my betters. I contrived, at last, at O——, to get taken on board a vessel bound to Leghorn, working out my passage. From Leghorn I went to Rome, and stationed myself at the door of the cardinal's palace. Out he came, — his gilded coach at the gate.

“‘Ho, father,’ said I, ‘don’t you know me?’

“‘Who are you?’

“‘Your son,’ said I, in a whisper.

“The cardinal drew back, looked at me earnestly, and mused a moment. ‘All men are my sons,’ quoth he then, very mildly; ‘there is gold for thee. To him who begs once, alms are due; to him who begs twice, jails are open. Take the hint and molest me no more. Heaven bless thee!’ With that he got into his coach and drove off to the Vatican. His purse, which he had left behind, was well supplied. I was grateful and contented, and took my way to Terracina. I had not long passed the marshes, when I saw two horsemen approach at a canter.

“‘You look poor, friend,’ said one of them, halting; ‘yet you are strong.’

“‘Poor men and strong are both serviceable and dangerous, Signor Cavalier.’

“‘Well said! follow us.’

“I obeyed and became a bandit. I rose by degrees; and as I have always been mild in my calling, and have taken purses without cutting throats, bear an excellent character, and can eat my macaroni at Naples without any danger to life and limbs. For the last two years I have settled in these parts, where I hold sway, and where I have purchased land. I am called a farmer, signor; and I myself now only rob for amusement, and to keep my hand in. I trust I have satisfied your curiosity. We are within a hundred yards of the castle.”

“And how,” asked the Englishman, whose interest had been much excited by his companion’s narrative, “and how came you acquainted with my host? and by what means has he so well conciliated the goodwill of yourself and your friends?”

Maestro Paulo turned his black eyes gravely towards his questioner. "Why, signor," said he, "you must surely know more of the foreign cavalier with the hard name than I do. All I can say is, that about a fortnight ago I chanced to be standing by a booth in the Toledo at Naples, when a sober-looking gentleman touched me by the arm, and said, 'Maestro Paulo, I want to make your acquaintance; do me the favor to come into yonder tavern.' When we were seated, my new acquaintance thus accosted me: 'The Count d'O—— has offered to let me hire his old castle near B——. You know the spot?'"

"Extremely well; no one has inhabited it for a century at least; it is half in ruins, signor. A queer place to hire; I hope the rent is not heavy."

"'Maestro Paulo,' said he, 'I am a philosopher, and don't care for luxuries. I want a quiet retreat for some scientific experiments. The castle will suit me very well, provided you will accept me as a neighbor, and place me and my friends under your special protection. I am rich; but I shall take nothing to the castle worth robbing. I will pay one rent to the count, and another to you.'"

"With that we soon came to terms, and as the strange signor doubled the sum I myself proposed, he is in high favor with all his neighbors. We would guard the old castle against an army. And now, signor, that I have been thus frank, be frank with me. Who is this singular cavalier?"

"Who? — he himself told you, a philosopher."

"Hem! Searching for the philosopher's stone, eh? A bit of a magician; afraid of the priests?"

"Precisely. You have hit it."

"I thought so; and you are his pupil?"

"I am."

"I wish you well through it," said the robber, seriously, and crossing himself with much devotion; "I am not much better than other people, but one's soul is one's soul. I do not mind a little honest robbery, or knocking a man on the head if need be, — but to make a bargain with the devil! — Ah! take care, young gentleman, take care."

"You need not fear," said Glyndon, smiling; "my preceptor is too wise and too good for such a compact. But here we are, I suppose. A noble ruin! A glorious prospect!"

Glyndon paused delightedly, and surveyed the scene before and below with the eye of a poet and a painter. Insensibly, while listening to the bandit, he had wound up a considerable ascent, and now he was upon a broad ledge of rock covered with mosses and dwarf shrubs. Between this eminence and another of equal height, upon which the castle was built, there was a deep but narrow fissure, overgrown with the most profuse foliage, so that the eye could not penetrate many yards below the rugged surface of the abyss; but the profoundness might well be conjectured by the hoarse, low, monotonous sound of waters unseen that rolled below, and the subsequent course of which was visible at a distance in a perturbed and rapid stream that intersected the waste and desolate valleys. To the left, the prospect seemed almost boundless; the extreme clearness of the purple air serving to render distinct the features of a range of country that a conqueror of old might have deemed in itself a kingdom. Lonely and desolate as the road which Glyndon had passed that day had appeared, the landscape now seemed studded with castles, spires, and villages. Afar off, Naples gleamed whitely in the last rays of the sun, and the rose-tints of the horizon melted into the azure of her glorious bay. Yet more remote, and in another part of the prospect, might be caught, dim and shadowy, and backed by the darkest foliage, the ruined village of the ancient Possidonia. There, in the midst of his blackened and sterile realms, rose the dismal Mount of Fire; while, on the other hand, winding through variegated plains, to which distance lent all its magic, glittered many a stream, by which Etruscan and Sybarite, Roman and Saracen and Norman, had, at intervals of ages, pitched the invading tent. All the visions of the past—the stormy and dazzling histories of Southern Italy—rushed over the artist's mind as he gazed below. And then, slowly turning to look behind, he saw the gray and mouldering walls of the castle in which he sought the secrets that were to give to hope in the Future a mightier empire than memory owns in

the Past. It was one of those baronial fortresses with which Italy was studded in the earlier middle ages, having but little of the Gothic grace of grandeur which belongs to the ecclesiastical architecture of the same time; but rude, vast, and menacing even in decay. A wooden bridge was thrown over the chasm, wide enough to admit two horsemen abreast; and the planks trembled and gave back a hollow sound as Glyndon urged his jaded steed across.

A road that had once been broad, and paved with rough flags, but which now was half obliterated by long grass and rank weeds, conducted to the outer court of the castle hard by; the gates were open, and half the building in this part was dismantled, the ruins partially hid by ivy that was the growth of centuries. But on entering the inner court, Glyndon was not sorry to notice that there was less appearance of neglect and decay: some wild roses gave a smile to the gray walls; and in the centre there was a fountain, in which the waters still trickled coolly, and with a pleasing murmur, from the jaws of a gigantic triton. Here he was met by Mejnour with a smile.

"Welcome, my friend and pupil," said he; "he who seeks for Truth can find in these solitudes an immortal Académé."



## CHAPTER II.

THE attendants which Mejnour had engaged for his strange abode were such as might suit a philosopher of few wants. An old Armenian, whom Glyndon recognized as in the mystic's service at Naples; a tall, hard-featured woman from the village, recommended by Maestro Paulo; and two long-haired, smooth-spoken, but fierce-visaged youths, from the same place, and honored by the same sponsorship, — constituted the establishment. The rooms used by the sage were commodious and weather-proof, with some remains of ancient splendor in the

faded arras that clothed the walls and the huge tables of costly marble and elaborate carving. Glyndon's sleeping apartment communicated with a kind of belvidere or terrace that commanded prospects of unrivalled beauty and extent, and was separated, on the other side, by a long gallery and a flight of ten or a dozen stairs, from the private chambers of the mystic. There was about the whole place a sombre, and yet not displeasing, depth of repose. It suited well with the studies to which it was now to be appropriated.

For several days Mejnour refused to confer with Glyndon on the subjects nearest to his heart.

"All without," said he, "is prepared, but not all within. Your own soul must grow accustomed to the spot, and filled with the surrounding Nature; for Nature is the source of all inspiration."

With these words, which savored a little of jargon, Mejnour turned to lighter topics. He made the Englishman accompany him in long rambles through the wild scenes around, and he smiled approvingly when the young artist gave way to the enthusiasm which their fearful beauty could not have failed to rouse in a duller breast; and then Mejnour poured forth to his wondering pupil the stores of a knowledge that seemed inexhaustible and boundless. He gave accounts the most curious, graphic, and minute, of the various races — their characters, habits, creeds, and manners — by which that fair land had been successively overrun. It is true that his descriptions could not be found in books, and were unsupported by learned authorities; but he possessed the true charm of the tale-teller, and spoke of all with the animated confidence of a personal witness. Sometimes, too, he would converse upon the more durable and the loftier mysteries of Nature with an eloquence and a research which invested them with all the colors rather of poetry than science. Insensibly the young artist found himself elevated and soothed by the lore of his companion; the fever of his wild desires was slaked. His mind became more and more lulled into the divine tranquillity of contemplation; he felt himself a nobler being; and in the silence of his senses he imagined that he heard the voice of his soul.

It was to this state that Mejnour sought to bring the Neophyte, and in this elementary initiation the mystic was like every more ordinary sage. For he who seeks to discover must first reduce himself into a kind of abstract idealism, and be rendered up, in solemn and sweet bondage, to the faculties which contemplate and imagine.

Glyndon noticed that, in their rambles, Mejnour often paused where the foliage was rifest, to gather some herb or flower; and this reminded him that he had seen Zicci similarly occupied. "Can these humble children of Nature," said he one day to Mejnour, "things that bloom and wither in a day, be serviceable to the science of the higher secrets? Is there a pharmacy for the soul as well as the body, and do the nurslings of the summer minister not only to human health but spiritual immortality?"

"If," answered Mejnour, "before one property of herbalism was known to them, a stranger had visited a wandering tribe, — if he had told the savages that the herbs, which every day they trampled underfoot, were endowed with the most potent virtues; that one would restore to health a brother on the verge of death; that another would paralyze into idiocy their wisest sage; that a third would strike lifeless to the dust their most stalwart champion; that tears and laughter, vigor and disease, madness and reason, wakefulness and sleep, existence and dissolution, were coiled up in those unregarded leaves, — would they not have held him a sorcerer or a liar? To half the virtues of the vegetable world mankind are yet in the darkness of the savages I have supposed. There are faculties within us with which certain herbs have affinity, and over which they have power. The moly of the ancients was not all a fable."

One evening, Glyndon had lingered alone and late upon the ramparts, — watching the stars as, one by one, they broke upon the twilight. Never had he felt so sensibly the mighty power of the heavens and the earth upon man! how much the springs of our intellectual being are moved and acted upon by the solemn influences of Nature! As a patient on whom, slowly and by degrees, the agencies of mesmerism are brought to bear, he acknowledged to his heart the growing force of that vast

and universal magnetism which is the life of creation, and binds the atom to the whole. A strange and ineffable consciousness of power, of the something great within the perishable clay, appealed to feelings at once dim and glorious,—rather faintly recognized than all unknown. An impulse that he could not resist led him to seek the mystic. He would demand, that hour, his initiation into the worlds beyond our world; he was prepared to breathe a diviner air. He entered the castle, and strode through the shadowy and star-lit gallery which conducted to Mejnour's apartment.

THE END.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [So far as Zicci was ever finished.]



**THE**  
**HAUNTED AND THE HAUNTERS;**  
**OR, THE HOUSE AND THE BRAIN.**



## THE HAUNTED AND THE HAUNTERS;

### OR, THE HOUSE AND THE BRAIN.

---

A FRIEND of mine, who is a man of letters and a philosopher, said to me one day, as if between jest and earnest, — “Fancy! since we last met, I have discovered a haunted house in the midst of London.”

“Really haunted? — and by what, — ghosts?”

“Well, I can’t answer that question; all I know is this, — six weeks ago my wife and I were in search of a furnished apartment. Passing a quiet street, we saw on the window of one of the houses a bill, ‘Apartments, Furnished.’ The situation suited us: we entered the house, liked the rooms, engaged them by the week, and left them the third day. No power on earth could have reconciled my wife to stay longer; and I don’t wonder at it.”

“What did you see?”

“Excuse me: I have no desire to be ridiculed as a superstitious dreamer; nor, on the other hand, could I ask you to accept on my affirmation what you would hold to be incredible without the evidence of your own senses. Let me only say this, it was not so much what we saw or heard (in which you might fairly suppose that we were the dupes of our own excited fancy, or the victims of imposture in others) that drove us away, as it was an undefinable terror which seized both of us whenever we passed by the door of a certain unfurnished room, in which we neither saw nor heard anything. And the strangest marvel of all was, that for once in my life

I agreed with my wife, — silly woman though she be, — and allowed, after the third night, that it was impossible to stay a fourth in that house. Accordingly, on the fourth morning I summoned the woman who kept the house and attended on us, and told her that the rooms did not quite suit us, and we would not stay out our week. She said, dryly, ‘I know why; you have stayed longer than any other lodger. Few ever stayed a second night; none before you a third. But I take it they have been very kind to you.’

“‘They — who?’ I asked, affecting to smile.

“‘Why, they who haunt the house, whoever they are. I don’t mind them; I remember them many years ago, when I lived in this house, not as a servant; but I know they will be the death of me some day. I don’t care: I’m old, and must die soon anyhow; and then I shall be with them, and in this house still.’ The woman spoke with so dreary a calmness, that really it was a sort of awe that prevented my conversing with her further. I paid for my week, and too happy were my wife and I to get off so cheaply.”

“You excite my curiosity,” said I; “nothing I should like better than to sleep in a haunted house. Pray give me the address of the one which you left so ignominiously.”

My friend gave me the address; and when we parted, I walked straight towards the house thus indicated.

It is situated on the north side of Oxford Street, in a dull but respectable thoroughfare. I found the house shut up, — no bill at the window, and no response to my knock. As I was turning away, a beer-boy, collecting pewter pots at the neighbouring areas, said to me, “Do you want any one at that house, sir?”

“Yes, I heard it was to be let.”

“Let! — why, the woman who kept it is dead, has been dead these three weeks; and no one can be found to stay there, though Mr. J—— offered ever so much. He offered mother, who chars for him, £1 a week just to open and shut the windows, and she would not.”

“Would not! — and why?”

“The house is haunted; and the old woman who kept it

was found dead in her bed, with her eyes wide open. They say the devil strangled her."

"Pooh!—you speak of Mr. J——. Is he the owner of the house?"

"Yes."

"Where does he live?"

"In G—— Street, No. ——."

"What is he?—in any business?"

"No, sir, — nothing particular; a single gentleman."

I gave the pot-boy the gratuity earned by his liberal information, and proceeded to Mr. J——, in G—— Street, which was close by the street that boasted the haunted house. I was lucky enough to find Mr. J—— at home, — an elderly man, with intelligent countenance and prepossessing manners.

I communicated my name and my business frankly. I said I heard the house was considered to be haunted; that I had a strong desire to examine a house with so equivocal a reputation; that I should be greatly obliged if he would allow me to hire it, though only for a night. I was willing to pay for that privilege whatever he might be inclined to ask. "Sir," said Mr. J——, with great courtesy, "the house is at your service, for as short or as long a time as you please. Rent is out of the question; the obligation will be on my side should you be able to discover the cause of the strange phenomena which at present deprive it of all value. I cannot let it, for I cannot even get a servant to keep it in order or answer the door. Unluckily the house is haunted, if I may use that expression, not only by night, but by day; though at night the disturbances are of a more unpleasant and sometimes of a more alarming character. The poor old woman who died in it three weeks ago was a pauper whom I took out of a workhouse; for in her childhood she had been known to some of my family, and had once been in such good circumstances that she had rented that house of my uncle. She was a woman of superior education and strong mind, and was the only person I could ever induce to remain in the house. Indeed, since her death, which was sudden, and the coroner's inquest, which gave it a notoriety in the neighborhood, I have so despaired of

finding any person to take charge of the house, much more a tenant, that I would willingly let it rent free for a year to any one who would pay its rates and taxes."

"How long is it since the house acquired this sinister character?"

"That I can scarcely tell you, but very many years since. The old woman I spoke of said it was haunted when she rented it between thirty and forty years ago. The fact is, that my life has been spent in the East Indies, and in the civil service of the Company. I returned to England last year, on inheriting the fortune of an uncle, among whose possessions was the house in question. I found it shut up and uninhabited. I was told that it was haunted, that no one would inhabit it. I smiled at what seemed to me so idle a story. I spent some money in repairing it; added to its old-fashioned furniture a few modern articles; advertised it, and obtained a lodger for a year. He was a colonel on half-pay. He came in with his family,—a son and a daughter, and four or five servants: they all left the house the next day; and although each of them declared that he had seen something different from that which had scared the others, a something still was equally terrible to all. I really could not in conscience sue, nor even blame, the colonel for breach of agreement. Then I put in the old woman I have spoken of, and she was empowered to let the house in apartments. I never had one lodger who stayed more than three days. I do not tell you their stories; to no two lodgers have there been exactly the same phenomena repeated. It is better that you should judge for yourself than enter the house with an imagination influenced by previous narratives; only be prepared to see and to hear something or other, and take whatever precautions you yourself please."

"Have you never had a curiosity yourself to pass a night in that house?"

"Yes. I passed not a night, but three hours in broad daylight alone in that house. My curiosity is not satisfied, but it is quenched. I have no desire to renew the experiment. You cannot complain, you see, sir, that I am not sufficiently

candid; and, unless your interest be exceedingly eager and your nerves unusually strong, I honestly add that I advise you *not* to pass a night in that house."

"My interest *is* exceedingly keen," said I, "and though only a coward will boast of his nerves in situations wholly unfamiliar to him, yet my nerves have been seasoned in such variety of danger that I have the right to rely on them, — even in a haunted house."

Mr. J—— said very little more; he took the keys of the house out of his bureau, gave them to me; and, thanking him cordially for his frankness, and his urbane concession to my wish, I carried off my prize.

Impatient for the experiment, as soon as I reached home, I summoned my confidential servant, — a young man of gay spirits, fearless temper, and as free from superstitious prejudice as any one I could think of.

"F——," said I, "you remember in Germany how disappointed we were at not finding a ghost in that old castle which was said to be haunted by a headless apparition? Well, I have heard of a house in London which, I have reason to hope, is decidedly haunted. I mean to sleep there to-night. From what I hear, there is no doubt that something will allow itself to be seen or to be heard, — something, perhaps, excessively horrible. Do you think if I take you with me, I may rely on your presence of mind, whatever may happen?"

"Oh, sir! pray trust me," answered F——, grinning with delight.

"Very well; then here are the keys of the house; this is the address. Go now; select for me any bedroom you please; and, since the house has not been inhabited for weeks, make up a good fire; air the bed well; see, of course, that there are candles as well as fuel. Take with you my revolver and my dagger, — so much for my weapons: arm yourself equally well; and if we are not a match for a dozen ghosts, we shall be but a sorry couple of Englishmen."

I was engaged for the rest of the day on business so urgent that I had not leisure to think much on the nocturnal adventure to which I had plighted my honor. I dined alone, and

very late, and, while dining, read, as is my habit. I selected one of the volumes of Macaulay's Essays. I thought to myself that I would take the book with me; there was so much of healthfulness in the style, and practical life in the subjects, that it would serve as an antidote against the influences of superstitious fancy.

Accordingly, about half-past nine, I put the book into my pocket, and strolled leisurely towards the haunted house. I took with me a favorite dog, — an exceedingly sharp, bold, and vigilant bull-terrier, — a dog fond of prowling about strange ghostly corners and passages at night in search of rats, — a dog of dogs for a ghost.

It was a summer night, but chilly, the sky somewhat gloomy and overcast. Still there was a moon, — faint and sickly, but still a moon; and, if the clouds permitted, after midnight it would be brighter.

I reached the house, knocked, and my servant opened with a cheerful smile.

"All right, sir, and very comfortable."

"Oh!" said I, rather disappointed; "have you not seen nor heard anything remarkable?"

"Well, sir, I must own I have heard something queer."

"What? — what?"

"The sound of feet pattering behind me; and once or twice small noises like whispers close at my ear, — nothing more."

"You are not at all frightened?"

"I! not a bit of it, sir;" and the man's bold look reassured me on one point; namely, that happen what might, he would not desert me.

We were in the hall, the street door closed, and my attention was now drawn to my dog. He had at first run in eagerly enough, but had sneaked back to the door, and was scratching and whining to get out. After patting him on the head, and encouraging him gently, the dog seemed to reconcile himself to the situation, and followed me and F—— through the house, but keeping close at my heels, instead of hurrying inquisitively in advance, which was his usual and normal habit in all strange



places. We first visited the subterranean apartments, the kitchen and other offices, and especially the cellars, in which last there were two or three bottles of wine still left in a bin, covered with cobwebs, and evidently, by their appearance, undisturbed for many years. It was clear that the ghosts were not winebibbers. For the rest we discovered nothing of interest. There was a gloomy little back yard, with very high walls. The stones of this yard were very damp; and what with the damp, and what with the dust and smoke-grime on the pavement, our feet left a slight impression where we passed. And now appeared the first strange phenomenon witnessed by myself in this strange abode. I saw, just before me, the print of a foot suddenly form itself, as it were. I stopped, caught hold of my servant, and pointed to it. In advance of that footprint as suddenly dropped another. We both saw it. I advanced quickly to the place; the footprint kept advancing before me, a small footprint, — the foot of a child: the impression was too faint thoroughly to distinguish the shape, but it seemed to us both that it was the print of a naked foot. This phenomenon ceased when we arrived at the opposite wall, nor did it repeat itself on returning. We remounted the stairs, and entered the rooms on the ground floor, — a dining parlor, a small back-parlor, and a still smaller third room that had been probably appropriated to a footman, — all still as death. We then visited the drawing-rooms, which seemed fresh and new. In the front room I seated myself in an armchair. F—— placed on the table the candlestick with which he had lighted us. I told him to shut the door. As he turned to do so, a chair opposite to me moved from the wall quickly and noiselessly, and dropped itself about a yard from my own chair, immediately fronting it.

“Why, this is better than the turning-tables,” said I, with a half-laugh; and as I laughed, my dog put back his head and howled.

F——, coming back, had not observed the movement of the chair. He employed himself now in stilling the dog. I continued to gaze on the chair, and fancied I saw on it a pale blue misty outline of a human figure, but an outline so indistinct

that I could only distrust my own vision. The dog now was quiet.

"Put back that chair opposite to me," said I to F——; "put it back to the wall."

F—— obeyed. "Was that you, sir?" said he, turning abruptly.

"I! — what?"

"Why, something struck me. I felt it sharply on the shoulder, — just here."

"No," said I. "But we have jugglers present; and, though we may not discover their tricks, we shall catch *them* before they frighten *us*."

We did not stay long in the drawing-rooms; in fact, they felt so damp and so chilly that I was glad to get to the fire upstairs. We locked the doors of the drawing-rooms, — a precaution which, I should observe, we had taken with all the rooms we had searched below. The bedroom my servant had selected for me was the best on the floor, — a large one, with two windows fronting the street. The four-posted bed, which took up no inconsiderable space, was opposite to the fire, which burned clear and bright; a door in the wall to the left, between the bed and the window, communicated with the room which my servant appropriated to himself. This last was a small room with a sofa-bed, and had no communication with the landing-place, — no other door but that which conducted to the bedroom I was to occupy. On either side of my fireplace was a cupboard, without locks, flush with the wall, and covered with the same dull-brown paper. We examined these cupboards, — only hooks to suspend female dresses, — nothing else; we sounded the walls, — evidently solid, — the outer walls of the building. Having finished the survey of these apartments, warmed myself a few moments, and lighted my cigar, I then, still accompanied by F——, went forth to complete my reconnoitre. In the landing-place there was another door; it was closed firmly. "Sir," said my servant, in surprise, "I unlocked this door with all the others when I first came; it cannot have got locked from the inside, for —"

Before he had finished his sentence, the door, which neither

of us then was touching, opened quietly of itself. We looked at each other a single instant. The same thought seized both, — some human agency might be detected here. I rushed in first; my servant followed. A small blank dreary room without furniture, — a few empty boxes and hampers in a corner, — a small window, — the shutters closed, — not even a fireplace, — no other door but that by which we had entered, — no carpet on the floor, and the floor seemed very old, uneven, worm-eaten, mended here and there, as was shown by the whiter patches on the wood; but no living being, and no visible place in which a living being could have hidden. As we stood gazing round, the door by which we had entered closed as quietly as it had before opened: we were imprisoned.

For the first time I felt a creep of undefinable horror. Not so my servant. "Why, they don't think to trap us, sir; I could break that trumpery door with a kick of my foot."

"Try first if it will open to your hand," said I, shaking off the vague apprehension that had seized me, "while I unclosethe shutters and see what is without."

I unbarred the shutters; the window looked on the little back yard I have before described; there was no ledge without, — nothing to break the sheer descent of the wall. No man getting out of that window would have found any footing till he had fallen on the stones below.

F—, meanwhile, was vainly attempting to open the door. He now turned round to me and asked my permission to use force. And I should here state, in justice to the servant, that, far from evincing any superstitious terrors, his nerve, composure, and even gayety amidst circumstances so extraordinary, compelled my admiration, and made me congratulate myself on having secured a companion in every way fitted to the occasion. I willingly gave him the permission he required. But though he was a remarkably strong man, his force was as idle as his milder efforts; the door did not even shake to his stoutest kick. Breathless and panting, he desisted. I then tried the door myself, equally in vain. As I ceased from the effort, again that creep of horror came over me; but this time it was more cold and stubborn. I felt as if some strange

and ghastly exhalation were rising up from the chinks of that rugged floor, and filling the atmosphere with a venomous influence hostile to human life. The door now very slowly and quietly opened as of its own accord. We precipitated ourselves into the landing-place. We both saw a large pale light — as large as the human figure, but shapeless and unsubstantial — move before us, and ascend the stairs that led from the landing into the attics. I followed the light, and my servant followed me. It entered, to the right of the landing, a small garret, of which the door stood open. I entered in the same instant. The light then collapsed into a small globule, exceedingly brilliant and vivid; rested a moment on a bed in the corner, quivered, and vanished. We approached the bed and examined it, — a half-tester, such as is commonly found in attics devoted to servants. On the drawers that stood near it we perceived an old faded silk kerchief, with the needle still left in a rent half repaired. The kerchief was covered with dust; probably it had belonged to the old woman who had last died in that house, and this might have been her sleeping-room. I had sufficient curiosity to open the drawers: there were a few odds and ends of female dress, and two letters tied round with a narrow ribbon of faded yellow. I took the liberty to possess myself of the letters. We found nothing else in the room worth noticing, nor did the light reappear; but we distinctly heard, as we turned to go, a pattering footfall on the floor, — just before us. We went through the other attics (in all four), the footfall still preceding us. Nothing to be seen; nothing but the footfall heard. I had the letters in my hand; just as I was descending the stairs I distinctly felt my wrist seized, and a faint soft effort made to draw the letters from my clasp. I only held them the more tightly, and the effort ceased.

We regained the bedchamber appropriated to myself, and I then remarked that my dog had not followed us when we had left it. He was thrusting himself close to the fire and trembling. I was impatient to examine the letters; and, while I read them, my servant opened a little box in which he had deposited the weapons I had ordered him to bring,

took them out, placed them on a table close at my bed-head, and then occupied himself in soothing the dog, who, however, seemed to heed him very little.

The letters were short; they were dated; the dates exactly thirty-five years ago. They were evidently from a lover to his mistress, or a husband to some young wife. Not only the terms of expression, but a distinct reference to a former voyage, indicated the writer to have been a seafarer. The spelling and handwriting were those of a man imperfectly educated, but still the language itself was forcible. In the expressions of endearment there was a kind of rough wild love; but here and there were dark unintelligible hints at some secret not of love, — some secret that seemed of crime. "We ought to love each other," was one of the sentences I remember, "for how every one else would execrate us if all was known." Again: "Don't let any one be in the same room with you at night; you talk in your sleep." And again: "What's done can't be undone; and I tell you there's nothing against us unless the dead could come to life." Here there was underlined in a better handwriting (a female's), "They do!" At the end of the letter latest in date the same female hand had written these words: "Lost at sea the 4th of June, the same day as —"

I put down the letters, and began to muse over their contents.

Fearing, however, that the train of thought into which I fell might unsteady my nerves, I fully determined to keep my mind in a fit state to cope with whatever of marvellous the advancing night might bring forth. I roused myself; laid the letters on the table; stirred up the fire, which was still bright and cheering, and opened my volume of Macaulay. I read quietly enough till about half-past eleven. I then threw myself dressed upon the bed, and told my servant he might retire to his own room, but must keep himself awake. I bade him leave open the door between the two rooms. Thus alone, I kept two candles burning on the table by my bed-head. I placed my watch beside the weapons, and calmly resumed my Macaulay. Opposite to me the fire burned clear; and on the

hearthrug, seemingly asleep, lay the dog. In about twenty minutes I felt an exceedingly cold air pass by my cheek, like a sudden draught. I fancied the door to my right, communicating with the landing-place, must have got open: but no; it was closed. I then turned my glance to my left, and saw the flame of the candles violently swayed as by a wind. At the same moment the watch beside the revolver softly slid from the table, — softly, softly, — no visible hand; it was gone. I sprang up, seizing the revolver with the one hand, the dagger with the other: I was not willing that my weapons should share the fate of the watch. Thus armed, I looked round the floor; no sign of the watch. Three slow, loud, distinct knocks were now heard at the bed-head; my servant called out, "Is that you, sir?"

"No; be on your guard."

The dog now roused himself and sat on his haunches, his ears moving quickly backwards and forwards. He kept his eyes fixed on me with a look so strange that he concentrated all my attention on himself. Slowly he rose up, all his hair bristling, and stood perfectly rigid, and with the same wild stare. I had no time, however, to examine the dog. Presently my servant emerged from his room; and if ever I saw horror in the human face, it was then. I should not have recognized him had we met in the street, so altered was every lineament. He passed by me quickly, saying in a whisper that seemed scarcely to come from his lips, "Run — run! it is after me!" He gained the door to the landing, pulled it open, and rushed forth. I followed him into the landing involuntarily, calling him to stop; but, without heeding me, he bounded down the stairs, clinging to the balusters, and taking several steps at a time. I heard, where I stood, the street-door open; heard it again clap to. I was left alone in the haunted house.

It was but for a moment that I remained undecided whether or not to follow my servant; pride and curiosity alike forbade so dastardly a flight. I re-entered my room, closing the door after me, and proceeded cautiously into the interior chamber. I encountered nothing to justify my servant's terror. I again carefully examined the walls, to see if there were any concealed

door. I could find no trace of one; not even a seam in the dull-brown paper with which the room was hung. How, then, had the THING, whatever it was, which had so scared him, obtained ingress except through my own chamber?

I returned to my room, shut and locked the door that opened upon the interior one, and stood on the hearth, expectant and prepared. I now perceived that the dog had slunk into an angle of the wall, and was pressing himself close against it, as if literally striving to force his way into it. I approached the animal and spoke to it; the poor brute was evidently beside itself with terror. It showed all its teeth, the slaver dropping from its jaws, and would certainly have bitten me if I had touched it. It did not seem to recognize me. Whoever has seen at the Zoölogical Gardens a rabbit fascinated by a serpent, cowering in a corner, may form some idea of the anguish which the dog exhibited. Finding all efforts to soothe the animal in vain, and fearing that his bite might be as venomous in that state as in the madness of hydrophobia, I left him alone, placed my weapons on the table beside the fire, seated myself, and recommenced my Macaulay.

Perhaps, in order not to appear seeking credit for a courage, or rather a coolness, which the reader may conceive I exaggerate, I may be pardoned if I pause to indulge in one or two egotistical remarks.

As I hold presence of mind, or what is called courage, to be precisely proportioned to familiarity with the circumstances that lead to it, so I should say that I had been long sufficiently familiar with all experiments that appertain to the Marvellous. I had witnessed many very extraordinary phenomena in various parts of the world,—phenomena that would be either totally disbelieved if I stated them, or ascribed to supernatural agencies. Now, my theory is that the Supernatural is the Impossible, and that what is called supernatural is only a something in the laws of nature of which we have been hitherto ignorant. Therefore, if a ghost rise before me, I have not the right to say, "So, then, the supernatural is possible," but rather, "So, then, the apparition of a ghost,

is, contrary to received opinion, within the laws of nature ; that is, not supernatural."

Now, in all that I had hitherto witnessed, and indeed in all the wonders which the amateurs of mystery in our age record as facts, a material living agency is always required. On the Continent you will find still magicians who assert that they can raise spirits. Assume for the moment that they assert truly, still the living material form of the magician is present; and he is the material agency by which, from some constitutional peculiarities, certain strange phenomena are represented to your natural senses.

Accept, again, as truthful, the tales of spirit manifestation in America; musical or other sounds; writings on paper, produced by no discernible hand; articles of furniture moved without apparent human agency; or the actual sight and touch of hands, to which no bodies seem to belong,—still there must be found the MEDIUM or living being, with constitutional peculiarities capable of obtaining these signs. In fine, in all such marvels, supposing even that there is no imposture, there must be a human being like ourselves by whom, or through whom, the effects presented to human beings are produced. It is so with the now familiar phenomena of mesmerism or electro-biology; the mind of the person operated on is affected through a material living agent. Nor, supposing it true that a mesmerized patient can respond to the will or passes of a mesmerizer a hundred miles distant, is the response less occasioned by a material being; it may be through a material fluid—call it Electric, call it Odic, call it what you will—which has the power of traversing space and passing obstacles, that the material effect is communicated from one to the other. Hence all that I had hitherto witnessed, or expected to witness, in this strange house, I believed to be occasioned through some agency or medium as mortal as myself; and this idea necessarily prevented the awe with which those who regard as supernatural things that are not within the ordinary operations of nature might have been impressed by the adventures of that memorable night.



As, then, it was my conjecture that all that was presented or would be presented to my senses must originate in some human being gifted by constitution with the power so to present them, and having some motive so to do, I felt an interest in my theory which, in its way, was rather philosophical than superstitious. And I can sincerely say that I was in as tranquil a temper for observation as any practical experimentalist could be in awaiting the effects of some rare, though perhaps perilous, chemical combination. Of course, the more I kept my mind detached from fancy, the more the temper fitted for observation would be obtained; and I therefore riveted eye and thought on the strong daylight sense in the page of my Macaulay.

I now became aware that something interposed between the page and the light; the page was over-shadowed: I looked up, and I saw what I shall find it very difficult, perhaps impossible to describe.

It was a Darkness shaping itself forth from the air in very undefined outline. I cannot say it was of a human form; and yet it had more resemblance to a human form, or rather shadow, than to anything else. As it stood, wholly apart and distinct from the air and the light around it, its dimensions seemed gigantic, the summit nearly touching the ceiling. While I gazed, a feeling of intense cold seized me. An iceberg before me could not more have chilled me; nor could the cold of an iceberg have been more purely physical. I feel convinced that it was not the cold caused by fear. As I continued to gaze, I thought — but this I cannot say with precision — that I distinguished two eyes looking down on me from the height. One moment I fancied that I distinguished them clearly, the next they seemed gone; but still two rays of a pale-blue light frequently shot through the darkness, as from the height on which I half believed, half doubted, that I had encountered the eyes.

I strove to speak; my voice utterly failed me: I could only think to myself, "Is this fear? it is *not* fear!" I strove to rise, — in vain; I felt as if weighed down by an irresistible force. Indeed, my impression was that of an immense and

overwhelming Power opposed to my volition; that sense of utter inadequacy to cope with a force beyond man's, which one may feel *physically* in a storm at sea, in a conflagration, or when confronting some terrible wild beast, or rather, perhaps, the shark of the ocean, I felt *morally*. Opposed to my will was another will, as far superior to its strength as storm, fire, and shark are superior in material force to the force of man.

And now, as this impression grew on me,—now came, at last, horror,—horror to a degree that no words can convey. Still I retained pride, if not courage; and in my own mind I said, "This is horror, but it is not fear; unless I fear I cannot be harmed; my reason rejects this thing; it is an illusion,—I do not fear." With a violent effort I succeeded at last in stretching out my hand towards the weapon on the table; as I did so, on the arm and shoulder I received a strange shock, and my arm fell to my side powerless. And now, to add to my horror, the light began slowly to wane from the candles; they were not, as it were, extinguished, but their flame seemed very gradually withdrawn: it was the same with the fire; the light was extracted from the fuel; in a few minutes the room was in utter darkness. The dread that came over me, to be thus in the dark with that dark Thing, whose power was so intensely felt, brought a reaction of nerve. In fact, terror had reached that climax that either my senses must have deserted me or I must have burst through the spell. I did burst through it. I found voice, though the voice was a shriek. I remember that I broke forth with words like these—"I do not fear, my soul does not fear;" and at the same time I found strength to rise. Still in that profound gloom I rushed to one of the windows,—tore aside the curtain,—flung open the shutters; my first thought was—LIGHT. And when I saw the moon high, clear, and calm, I felt a joy that almost compensated for the previous terror. There was the moon, there was also the light from the gas-lamps in the deserted slumberous street. I turned to look back into the room; the moon penetrated its shadow very palely and partially; but still there was light. The dark Thing, whatever it might be, was gone;

except that I could yet see a dim shadow, which seemed the shadow of that shade, against the opposite wall.

My eye now rested on the table, and from under the table (which was without cloth or cover, an old mahogany round table) there rose a hand, visible as far as the wrist. It was a hand, seemingly, as much of flesh and blood as my own, but the hand of an aged person, — lean, wrinkled, small too, — a woman's hand. That hand very softly closed on the two letters that lay on the table: hand and letters both vanished. There then came the same three loud measured knocks I had heard at the bed-head before this extraordinary drama had commenced.

As those sounds slowly ceased, I felt the whole room vibrate sensibly; and at the far end there rose, as from the floor, sparks or globules like bubbles of light, many-colored, — green, yellow, fire-red, azure. Up and down, to and fro, hither, thither, as tiny will-o'-the-wisps, the sparks moved, slow or swift, each at its own caprice. A chair (as in the drawing-room below) was now advanced from the wall without apparent agency, and placed at the opposite side of the table. Suddenly, as forth from the chair, there grew a shape, — a woman's shape. It was distinct as a shape of life, — ghastly as a shape of death. The face was that of youth, with a strange mournful beauty; the throat and shoulders were bare, the rest of the form in a loose robe of cloudy white. It began sleeking its long yellow hair, which fell over its shoulders; its eyes were not turned towards me, but to the door; it seemed listening, watching, waiting. The shadow of the shade in the background grew darker; and again I thought I beheld the eyes gleaming out from the summit of the shadow, — eyes fixed upon that shape.

As if from the door, though it did not open, there grew out another shape, equally distinct, equally ghastly, — a man's shape, a young man's. It was in the dress of the last century, or rather in a likeness of such dress (for both the male shape and the female, though defined, were evidently unsubstantial, impalpable, — simulacra, phantasms); and there was something incongruous, grotesque, yet fearful, in the contrast between the elaborate finery, the courtly precision of that old-fashioned

garb, with its ruffles and lace and buckles, and the corpse-like aspect and ghost-like stillness of the flitting wearer. Just as the male shape approached the female, the dark Shadow started from the wall, all three for a moment wrapped in darkness. When the pale light returned, the two phantoms were as if in the grasp of the Shadow that towered between them; and there was a blood-stain on the breast of the female; and the phantom male was leaning on its phantom sword, and blood seemed trickling fast from the ruffles, from the lace; and the darkness of the intermediate Shadow swallowed them up,—they were gone. And again the bubbles of light shot and sailed and undulated, growing thicker and thicker and more wildly confused in their movements.

The closet door to the right of the fireplace now opened, and from the aperture there came the form of an aged woman. In her hand she held letters,—the very letters over which I had seen *the* Hand close; and behind her I heard a footstep. She turned round as if to listen, and then she opened the letters and seemed to read; and over her shoulder I saw a livid face, the face as of a man long drowned,—bloated, bleached,—seaweed tangled in its dripping hair; and at her feet lay a form as of a corpse, and beside the corpse there cowered a child, a miserable squalid child, with famine in its cheeks and fear in its eyes. And as I looked in the old woman's face, the wrinkles and lines vanished, and it became a face of youth,—hard-eyed, stony, but still youth; and the Shadow darted forth, and darkened over these phantoms as it had darkened over the last.

Nothing now was left but the Shadow, and on that my eyes were intently fixed, till again eyes grew out of the Shadow,—malignant, serpent eyes. And the bubbles of light again rose and fell, and in their disordered, irregular, turbulent maze mingled with the wan moonlight. And now from these globules themselves, as from the shell of an egg, monstrous things burst out; the air grew filled with them; larvæ so bloodless and so hideous that I can in no way describe them except to remind the reader of the swarming life which the solar microscope brings before his eyes in a drop of water,—

things transparent, supple, agile, chasing each other, devouring each other, — forms like nought ever beheld by the naked eye. As the shapes were without symmetry, so their movements were without order. In their very vagrancies there was no sport; they came round me and round, thicker and faster and swifter, swarming over my head, crawling over my right arm, which was outstretched in involuntary command against all evil beings. Sometimes I felt myself touched, but not by them; invisible hands touched me. Once I felt the clutch as of cold soft fingers at my throat. I was still equally conscious that if I gave way to fear I should be in bodily peril; and I concentrated all my faculties in the single focus of resisting stubborn will. And I turned my sight from the Shadow, — above all, from those strange serpent eyes, — eyes that had now become distinctly visible. For there, though in nought else around me, I was aware that there was a WILL, and a will of intense, creative, working evil, which might crush down my own.

The pale atmosphere in the room began now to redden as if in the air of some near conflagration. The larvæ grew lurid as things that live in fire. Again the room vibrated; again were heard the three measured knocks; and again all things were swallowed up in the darkness of the dark Shadow, as if out of that darkness all had come, into that darkness all returned.

As the gloom receded, the Shadow was wholly gone. Slowly, as it had been withdrawn, the flame grew again into the candles on the table, again into the fuel in the grate. The whole room came once more calmly, healthfully into sight.

The two doors were still closed, the door communicating with the servant's room still locked. In the corner of the wall, into which he had so convulsively niched himself, lay the dog. I called to him, — no movement; I approached, — the animal was dead; his eyes protruded; his tongue out of his mouth; the froth gathered round his jaws. I took him in my arms; I brought him to the fire; I felt acute grief for the loss of my poor favorite, — acute self-reproach; I accused myself of his death; I imagined he had died of fright. But

what was my surprise on finding that his neck was actually broken. Had this been done in the dark? — must it not have been by a hand human as mine? — must there not have been a human agency all the while in that room? Good cause to suspect it. I cannot tell. I cannot do more than state the fact fairly; the reader may draw his own inference.

Another surprising circumstance, — my watch was restored to the table from which it had been so mysteriously withdrawn; but it had stopped at the very moment it was so withdrawn; nor, despite all the skill of the watchmaker, has it ever gone since, — that is, it will go in a strange erratic way for a few hours, and then come to a dead stop, — it is worthless.

Nothing more chanced for the rest of the night. Nor, indeed, had I long to wait before the dawn broke. Nor till it was broad daylight did I quit the haunted house. Before I did so, I revisited the little blind room in which my servant and myself had been for a time imprisoned. I had a strong impression — for which I could not account — that from that room had originated the mechanism of the phenomena — if I may use the term — which had been experienced in my chamber. And though I entered it now in the clear day, with the sun peering through the filmy window, I still felt, as I stood on its floors, the creep of the horror which I had first there experienced the night before, and which had been so aggravated by what had passed in my own chamber. I could not, indeed, bear to stay more than half a minute within those walls. I descended the stairs, and again I heard the footfall before me; and when I opened the street door, I thought I could distinguish a very low laugh. I gained my own home, expecting to find my runaway servant there. But he had not presented himself; nor did I hear more of him for three days, when I received a letter from him, dated from Liverpool, to this effect: —

HONORED SIR, — I humbly entreat your pardon, though I can scarcely hope that you will think that I deserve it, unless — which Heaven forbid! — you saw what I did. I feel that it will be years before I can recover myself; and as to being fit for service, it is out

of the question. I am therefore going to my brother-in-law at Melbourne. The ship sails to-morrow. Perhaps the long voyage may set me up. I do nothing now but start and tremble, and fancy it is behind me. I humbly beg you, honored sir, to order my clothes, and whatever wages are due to me, to be sent to my mother's, at Walworth; John knows her address.

The letter ended with additional apologies, somewhat incoherent, and explanatory details as to effects that had been under the writer's charge.

This flight may perhaps warrant a suspicion that the man wished to go to Australia, and had been somehow or other fraudulently mixed up with the events of the night. I say nothing in refutation of that conjecture; rather, I suggest it as one that would seem to many persons the most probable solution of improbable occurrences. My belief in my own theory remained unshaken. I returned in the evening to the house, to bring away in a hack-cab the things I had left there, with my poor dog's body. In this task I was not disturbed, nor did any incident worth note befall me, except that still, on ascending and descending the stairs, I heard the same foot-fall in advance. On leaving the house, I went to Mr. J——'s. He was at home. I returned him the keys, told him that my curiosity was sufficiently gratified, and was about to relate quickly what had passed, when he stopped me, and said, though with much politeness, that he had no longer any interest in a mystery which none had ever solved.

I determined at least to tell him of the two letters I had read, as well as of the extraordinary manner in which they had disappeared, and I then inquired if he thought they had been addressed to the woman who had died in the house, and if there were anything in her early history which could possibly confirm the dark suspicions to which the letters gave rise. Mr. J—— seemed startled, and, after musing a few moments, answered, "I am but little acquainted with the woman's earlier history, except, as I before told you, that her family were known to mine. But you revive some vague reminiscences to her prejudice. I will make inquiries, and inform you of their result. Still, even if we could admit the

popular superstition that a person who had been either the perpetrator or the victim of dark crimes in life could revisit, as a restless spirit, the scene in which those crimes had been committed, I should observe that the house was infested by strange sights and sounds before the old woman died. You smile,—what would you say?”

“I would say this, that I am convinced, if we could get to the bottom of these mysteries, we should find a living human agency.”

“What! you believe it is all an imposture? For what object?”

“Not an imposture in the ordinary sense of the word. If suddenly I were to sink into a deep sleep, from which you could not awake me, but in that sleep could answer questions with an accuracy which I could not pretend to when awake,—tell you what money you had in your pocket; nay, describe your very thoughts,—it is not necessarily an imposture, any more than it is necessarily supernatural. I should be, unconsciously to myself, under a mesmeric influence, conveyed to me from a distance by a human being who had acquired power over me by previous *rapport*.”

“But if a mesmerizer could so affect another living being, can you suppose that a mesmerizer could also affect inanimate objects,—move chairs, open and shut doors?”

“Or impress our senses with the belief in such effects, we never having been *en rapport* with the person acting on us? No. What is commonly called mesmerism could not do this; but there may be a power akin to mesmerism, and superior to it,—the power that in the old days was called Magic. That such a power may extend to all inanimate objects of matter, I do not say; but, if so, it would not be against nature: it would be only a rare power in nature which might be given to constitutions with certain peculiarities, and cultivated by practice to an extraordinary degree. That such a power might extend over the dead,—that is, over certain thoughts and memories that the dead may still retain,—and compel, not that which ought properly to be called the SOUL, and which is far beyond human reach, but rather a phantom



of what has been most earth-stained on earth, to make itself apparent to our senses, is a very ancient though obsolete theory, upon which I will hazard no opinion. But I do not conceive the power would be supernatural. Let me illustrate what I mean from an experiment which Paracelsus describes as not difficult, and which the author of the "Curiosities of Literature" cites as credible: A flower perishes; you burn it. Whatever were the elements of that flower while it lived are gone, dispersed, you know not whither; you can never discover nor re-collect them. But you can, by chemistry, out of the burnt dust of that flower, raise a spectrum of the flower, just as it seemed in life. It may be the same with the human being. The soul has as much escaped you as the essence or elements of the flower. Still you may make a spectrum of it. And this phantom, though in the popular superstition it is held to be the soul of the departed, must not be confounded with the true soul; it is but the *eidolon* of the dead form. Hence, like the best attested stories of ghosts or spirits, the thing that most strikes us is the absence of what we hold to be soul; that is, of superior emancipated intelligence. These apparitions come for little or no object: they seldom speak when they do come; if they speak, they utter no ideas above those of an ordinary person on earth. American spirit-seers have published volumes of communications, in prose and verse, which they assert to be given in the names of the most illustrious dead, — Shakspeare, Bacon, Heaven knows whom. Those communications, taking the best, are certainly not a whit of higher order than would be communications from living persons of fair talent and education; they are wondrously inferior to what Bacon, Shakspeare, and Plato said and wrote when on earth. Nor, what is more noticeable, do they ever contain an idea that was not on the earth before. Wonderful, therefore, as such phenomena may be (granting them to be truthful), I see much that philosophy may question, nothing that it is incumbent on philosophy to deny; that is, nothing supernatural. They are but ideas conveyed somehow or other (we have not yet discovered the means) from one mortal brain to another.

of about six years old. A month after the marriage, the body of this brother was found in the Thames, near London Bridge: there seemed some marks of violence about his throat; but they were not deemed sufficient to warrant the inquest in any other verdict than that of "found drowned."

The American and his wife took charge of the little boy, the deceased brother having by his will left his sister the guardian of his only child; and, in event of the child's death, the sister inherited. The child died about six months afterwards: it was supposed to have been neglected and ill-treated. The neighbors deposed to have heard it shriek at night. The surgeon who had examined it after death said that it was emaciated as if from want of nourishment, and the body was covered with livid bruises. It seemed that one winter night the child had sought to escape, crept out into the back yard, tried to scale the wall, fallen back exhausted, and been found at morning on the stones in a dying state. But though there was some evidence of cruelty, there was none of murder; and the aunt and her husband had sought to palliate cruelty by alleging the exceeding stubbornness and perversity of the child, who was declared to be half-witted. Be that as it may, at the orphan's death the aunt inherited her brother's fortune. Before the first wedded year was out, the American quitted England abruptly, and never returned to it. He obtained a cruising vessel, which was lost in the Atlantic two years afterwards. The widow was left in affluence: but reverses of various kinds had befallen her: a bank broke; an investment failed; she went into a small business and became insolvent; then she entered into service, sinking lower and lower, from housekeeper down to maid-of-all-work, — never long retaining a place, though nothing decided against her character was ever alleged. She was considered sober, honest, and peculiarly quiet in her ways; still nothing prospered with her. And so she had dropped into the workhouse, from which Mr. J—— had taken her, to be placed in charge of the very house which she had rented as mistress in the first year of her wedded life.

Mr. J—— added that he had passed an hour alone in the unfurnished room which I had urged him to destroy, and that

his impressions of dread while there were so great, though he had neither heard nor seen anything, that he was eager to have the walls bared and the floors removed as I had suggested. He had engaged persons for the work, and would commence any day I would name.

The day was accordingly fixed. I repaired to the haunted house; we went into the blind dreary room, took up the skirting, and then the floors. Under the rafters, covered with rubbish, was found a trap-door, quite large enough to admit a man. It was closely nailed down, with clamps and rivets of iron. On removing these we descended into a room below, the existence of which had never been suspected. In this room there had been a window and a flue; but they had been bricked over, evidently for many years. By the help of candles we examined this place; it still retained some mouldering furniture — three chairs, an oak settle, a table, — all of the fashion of about eighty years ago. There was a chest-of-drawers against the wall, in which we found, half-rotted away, old-fashioned articles of a man's dress, such as might have been worn eighty or a hundred years ago by a gentleman of some rank, — costly steel buckles and buttons, like those yet worn in court-dresses, a handsome court sword; in a waistcoat which had once been rich with gold-lace, but which was now blackened and foul with damp, we found five guineas, a few silver coins, and an ivory ticket, probably for some place of entertainment long since passed away. But our main discovery was in a kind of iron safe fixed to the wall, the lock of which it cost us much trouble to get picked.

In this safe were three shelves and two small drawers. Ranged on the shelves were several small bottles of crystal, hermetically stopped. They contained colorless volatile essences, of the nature of which I shall only say that they were not poisons; phosphor and ammonia entered into some of them. There were also some very curious glass tubes, and a small pointed rod of iron, with a large lump of rock-crystal, and another of amber, also a loadstone of great power.

In one of the drawers we found a miniature portrait set in gold, and retaining the freshness of its colors most remarkably,

considering the length of time it had probably been there. The portrait was that of a man who might be somewhat advanced in middle life, perhaps forty-seven or forty-eight.

It was a remarkable face, — a most impressive face. If you could fancy some mighty serpent transformed into man, preserving in the human lineaments the old serpent type, you would have a better idea of that countenance than long descriptions can convey: the width and flatness of frontal; the tapering elegance of contour disguising the strength of the deadly jaw; the long, large, terrible eye, glittering and green as the emerald; and withal a certain ruthless calm, as if from the consciousness of an immense power.

Mechanically I turned round the miniature to examine the back of it, and on the back was engraved a pentacle; in the middle of the pentacle a ladder, and the third step of the ladder was formed by the date 1765. Examining still more minutely, I detected a spring; this, on being pressed, opened the back of the miniature as a lid. Within-side the lid were engraved, "Marianna to thee, — Be faithful in life and in death to ——." Here follows a name that I will not mention, but it was not unfamiliar to me. I had heard it spoken of by old men in my childhood as the name borne by a dazzling charlatan who had made a great sensation in London for a year or so, and had fled the country on the charge of a double murder within his own house, — that of his mistress and his rival. I said nothing of this to Mr. J——, to whom reluctantly I resigned the miniature.

We had found no difficulty in opening the first drawer within the iron safe: we found great difficulty in opening the second; it was not locked, but it resisted all efforts, till we inserted in the chinks the edge of a chisel. When we had thus drawn it forth, we found a very singular apparatus in the nicest order. Upon a small thin book, or rather tablet, was placed a saucer of crystal: this saucer was filled with a clear liquid, — on that liquid floated a kind of compass, with a needle shifting rapidly round; but instead of the usual points of a compass were seven strange characters, not very unlike those used by astrologers to denote the planets. A peculiar, but not strong nor dis-

pleasing odor came from this drawer, which was lined with a wood that we afterwards discovered to be hazel. Whatever the cause of this odor, it produced a material effect on the nerves. We all felt it, even the two workmen who were in the room,—a creeping tingling sensation from the tips of the fingers to the roots of the hair. Impatient to examine the tablet, I removed the saucer. As I did so the needle of the compass went round and round with exceeding swiftness, and I felt a shock that ran through my whole frame, so that I dropped the saucer on the floor. The liquid was spilt; the saucer was broken; the compass rolled to the end of the room; and at that instant the walls shook to and fro, as if a giant had swayed and rocked them.

The two workmen were so frightened that they ran up the ladder by which we had descended from the trap-door; but, seeing that nothing more happened, they were easily induced to return.

Meanwhile I had opened the tablet: it was bound in plain red leather, with a silver clasp; it contained but one sheet of thick vellum, and on that sheet were inscribed, within a double pentacle, words in old monkish Latin, which are literally to be translated thus “On all that it can reach within these walls—sentient or inanimate, living or dead—as moves the needle, so work my will! Accursed be the house, and restless be the dwellers therein.”

We found no more. Mr. J—— burnt the tablet and its anathema. He razed to the foundations the part of the building containing the secret room with the chamber over it. He had then the courage to inhabit the house himself for a month, and a quieter, better-conditioned house could not be found in all London. Subsequently he let it to advantage, and his tenant has made no complaints.

THE END.



.

.

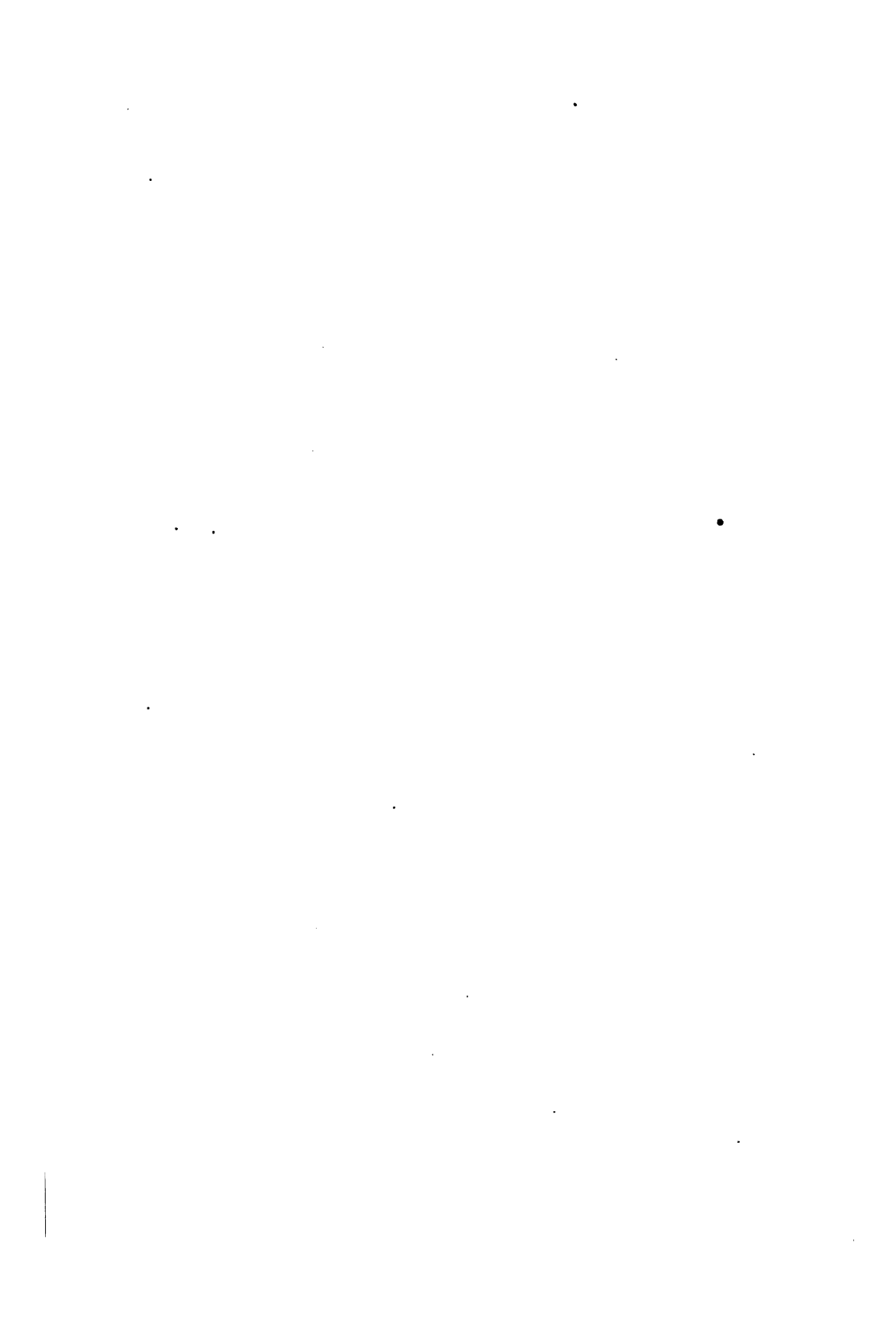
.

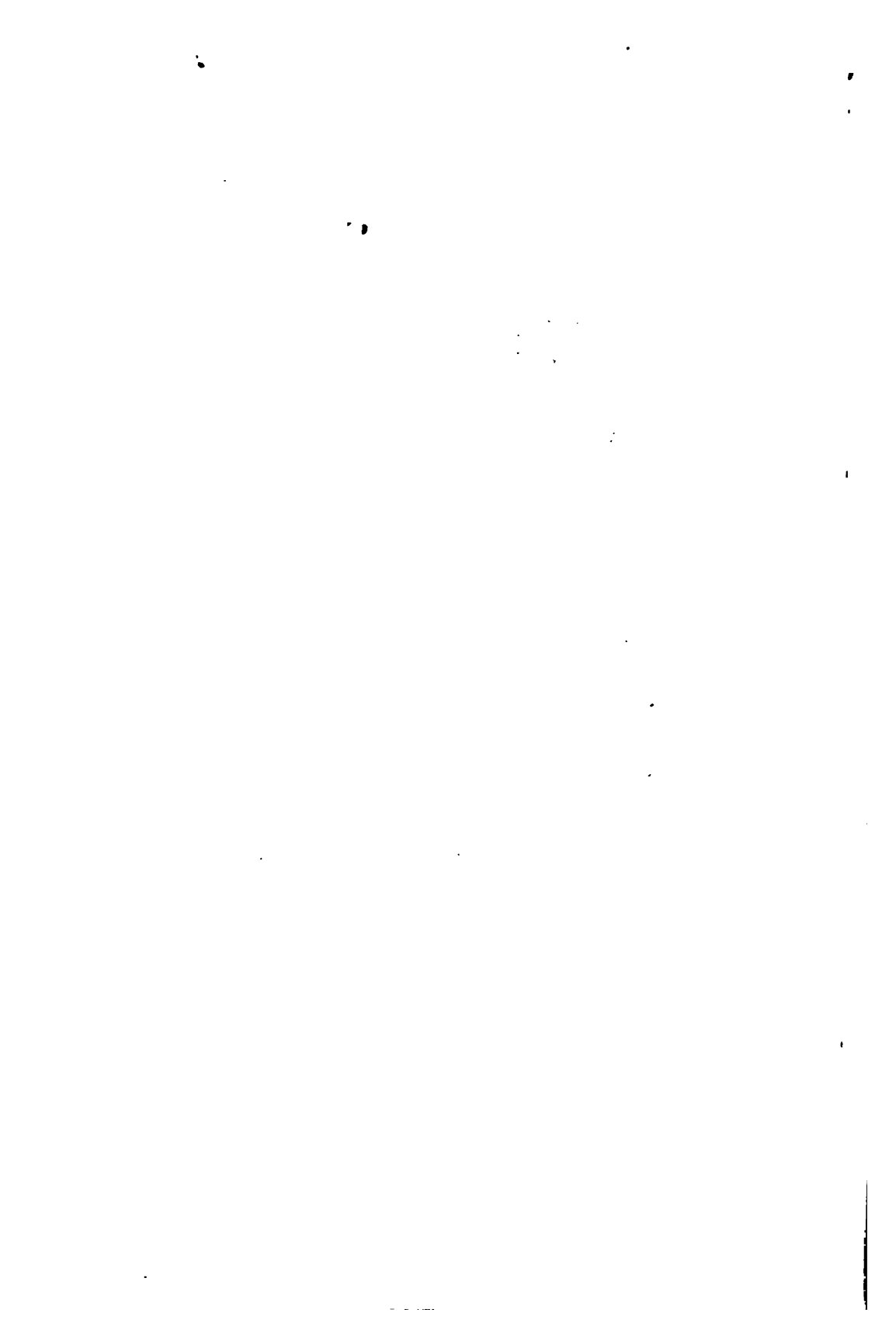
.

.









This book should be returned to  
the Library on or before the last date  
stamped below.

A fine of five cents a day is incurred  
by retaining it beyond the specified  
time.

Please return promptly.

BOOK BY  
JUL 7 1979